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September 1982

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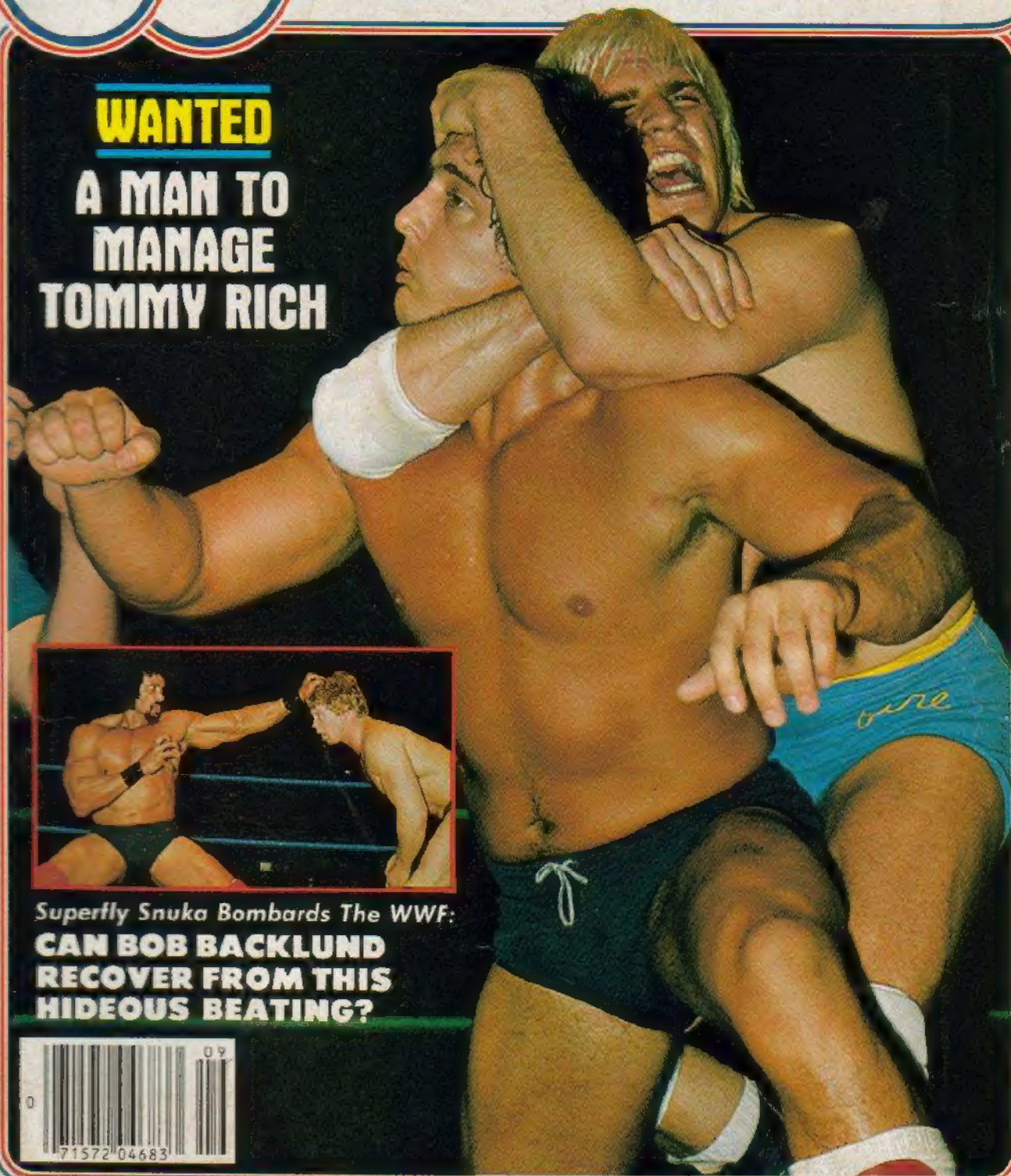
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

WANTED
A MAN TO
MANAGE
TOMMY RICH



Superfly Snuka Bombarbs The WWF:

CAN BOB BACKLUND
RECOVER FROM THIS
HIDEOUS BEATING?



KING'S COURT

By Peter King



Jesse Ventura grabs Rick Martel's head as Adrian Adonis delivers a kick to the midsection. Ventura and Adonis have been best friends and tag team partners for years and have mastered the technique of illegal double-team tactics.

GENERALLY, I CAN go days sometimes weeks, without seeing a wrestler. The job of editing a national wrestling magazine usually keeps me in the office, at my desk, unable to leave. Too often, the only wrestlers I see are on television.

But now, the wrestlers are coming to see me.

First, it was Roddy Piper. The details of his visit to our offices can be found in a feature story on page 32. Actually, the less I say about Mr. Roderick Q. Piper, the better.

Then, two days after Piper's appearance, I'm at my typewriter when I hear a mellow-sounding voice say, "Excuse me. Can I talk to you for a couple of seconds?"

Looking up, I saw the unmistakable face of Jesse Ventura. How many other 6'6" men do you know with a purple halo and a feather in their hair?

Trying to hide my surprise, I told Ventura to take a seat. "No," he said softly, "I want to make this a private discussion." So the two of us took the private elevator up to



Adonis and Ventura dump Greg Gagne out of the ring during an AWA tag team title defense in February 1981.

the third floor conference room. We walked into the oak-paneled room and I sat down, expecting Ventura to do the same. But he nervously walked around the room, eying every corner, apparently making sure no one else was there. I was beginning to feel as if I were in a James Bond movie.

Finally, Ventura sat down. "Would you like me to drop the cone of silence," I joked. But Ventura didn't even smile. The man was as serious as a snake about to eat a mouse. I figured I'd better get serious, too. "What's up, Jesse," I asked him.

"I want Adrian to hear about this, but not right away," Ventura said. Adrian who? I wondered. Hear about what? I just sat silently, waiting for his explanation.

"I told Adrian Adonis a couple of months ago I would team with him for as long as he wanted," Ventura said. "At the time, we made plans to win the WWF tag team title, then go on and take the NWA belts. We knew we could easily regain the AWA title whenever we wanted. Double-A [Ventura's nickname for Adonis] said we would dominate tag team wrestling for a decade. It really looked great."

Ventura paused and went to the
(Continued on page 52)

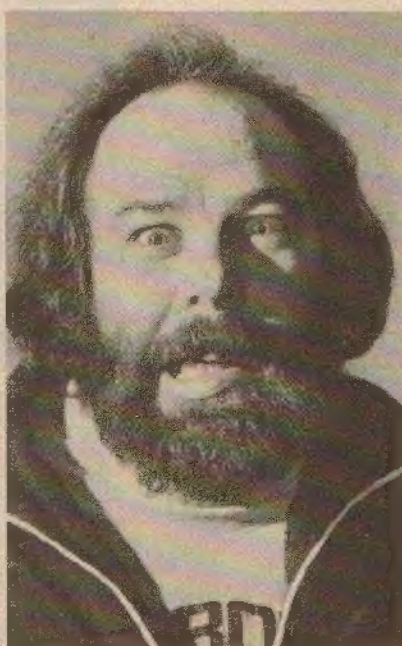
RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter

MYSTERY. WHAT WAS in the little black box Colonel Buck Robley has been carrying into Texas rings for months? That's what Bruiser Brody and Dick Slater wanted to find out.



Slater left the ring and Brody went to get the black box. Just then he was sneak-attacked by Robley and his men, who opened the box, took out a medicated cream substance, and rubbed it in Brody's left eye. In



Bruiser Brody (above left) paid a hefty price for wanting to find out the contents of the mysterious black box Buck Robley (above right) had been carrying into the ring before his matches.

Robley said he would reveal the contents of the box if they could beat his team of Bob Sweetan and Crazy Duggan. And as an added bonus, Brody and Slater would be given a choice of which would have the opportunity to grapple Robley in a five-minute "anything goes" match.

After 30 minutes of wild brawling, Brody and Slater won by disqualification. The two chose, and it was Brody who was to get the five minutes with Robley.

just seconds, Brody lost sight in the eye. Slater came to his rescue, but the damage had been done.

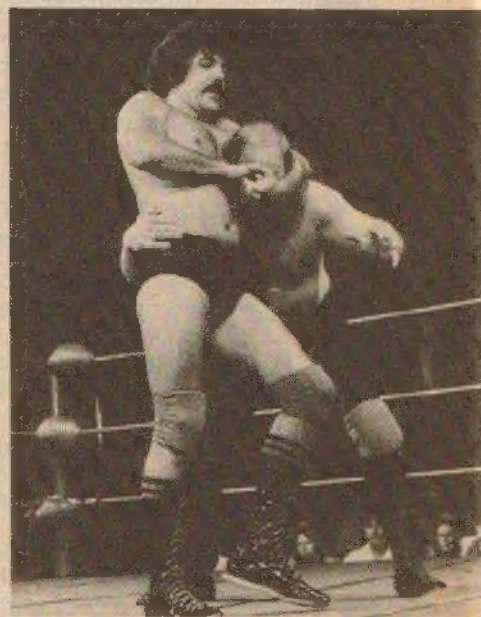
As of this writing, Brody is back, and although the eye has not regained full vision, he's out for revenge!

Buzz Sawyer used every illegal tactic he could think of to take the Georgia National title from Tommy Rich. Leroy Brown, Tommy's friend, became so

enraged at the tactics Sawyer used, he attacked Buzz as he was leaving the ring with the belt!

It was a bad month for Dory Funk Jr. and a great one for Butch Reed. Reed recently took the International title from Funk and then, in a tag team match, Reed and Sweet Brown Sugar won the North American belts from Funk and David Von Erich!

Jim Garvin has said, "To hell with clean wrestling!" He's joined the stable of James J. Dillon in Florida and has won the State belt from Mr. Wrestling II. "I told



Newly crowned Florida champion Jim Garvin, the latest addition to James J. Dillon's camp, applies a headlock on Buggy McGraw.

Garvin that I could make him great," Dillon boasts. "And I have."

(Continued on page 54)

ON ASSIGNMENT

BY STEVEN FARHOOD AND RICH COUNTIS

BACK IN MIAMI. Again Countis was off somewhere on assignment, and again I was left alone to wander the streets of the city.

Florida in the springtime can be hot...sometimes it can be too hot. I wish it were only that, because this particular day was a scorcher. Why the hell can't they send me down here in December when I need the vacation? Of course not, in December I'll probably be tracking the Canadian Wolfman in the Great White North somewhere up to my whazoo in snow.

Thanks a lot, Peter...or Matt...or whoever decided to send me here. Hell, you can't even find a cold brew before noon in this burg.

I searched my wallet for the scrap of paper I had been given back at the office. Press passes, telephone numbers, business cards, credit cards and enough documentation and personal information to write a book fell out and on to the floor of my hotel room.

It had to be here somewhere. Gum wrappers? Damn, I don't think I've cleaned my wallet out since high school.

Look at this: the application form for the Huxley Scholarship. I had wondered where that disappeared to. I turned it down long ago in favor of becoming a wrestling journalist, but I used to pull it out of the wallet once in a while just to show off, and to win a bar



Nagasaki gleefully uses a martial arts wristlock against Dick Murdoch. Nagasaki is known to be a member of the Black Ninja Society, but little else is known of the man.

bet once in a while. After all, it isn't every man who snubs the Huxley selection committee. In certain circles, my name was legend.

Ah, There it is. *Kam Chin's House of Weapons*. Matt told me

that Kam Chin's is where Kendo Nagasaki supposedly gets his Ninja outfits and his Kendo sticks, along with various and sundry other pieces of martial arts regalia.

It was a \$17 cab ride from the
(Continued on page 56)

IN FOCUS

With CRAIG PETERS

TWO MEN TOO BRUTAL TO PAIR

Bruiser Brody and Stan Hansen often wrestle together in tag team competition . . . but only in Japan. It seems as if the commissioners in the States fear the violent ramifications should these men get together, and prefer to avoid the issue of teaming Brody and Hansen.

"I can't understand what the hell's the matter with these idiot promoters," said Brody. "We're great together in Japan and we destroy every team we come up against. It really burns me that American com-

missioners have fears like this. It doesn't make any sense at all."

Recent word from Managing Editor Bill Apter, who just returned from Japan, is that the Brody and Hansen team are indeed a breathtaking combination—and also very violent.

I can understand the promoters' fears in this issue, but if Japanese promoters are able to handle any problems that arise, there's no reason American commissioners can't do the same.



BRUISER BRODY & STAN HANSEN

CAST YOUR VOTE, NOW!



RODDY PIPER

In this very issue there appears a story concerning Roddy Piper and what happens when his emotions get out of control (*see page 32*). Of course, Piper's hyperactive nature is familiar to viewers of *Georgia Championship Wrestling*, and not everyone is pleased by his comments and actions.

A poll in our sister publication, *The Wrestler* (August 1982 issue, on sale now) is asking the fans the vital question: Should Roddy Piper be banned from broadcasting? You can pick up a copy of *The Wrestler* for more information, or send your vote along with the reasons why to "Piper Vote," c/o TV Sports, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY, 11571. Every vote counts, so send in your ballot now!

(Continued on page 58)

FALLS BETWEEN FALLS



Some people like Roddy Piper, David and Gary Birdwell do not. They think the Scottish wrestler/announcer makes an idiot of himself every time he opens his mouth.

IDIOTIC PIPER

In the June 1982 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* a reader from West Virginia wrote a letter and said that she backed Roddy Piper. My brother and I personally think she's a jerk.

We have cable television and watch *Georgia Championship Wrestling* every week and are getting sick of listening to Piper shoot off his mouth the way he does. I don't know where he gets his idiocy from, but we don't like it one bit.

DAVID & GARY BIRDWELL
Iowa Falls, IA

TAKE OFF, SHOCKET

This letter goes out to Dan Shocket and his band of followers who believe every word he shoves down their throats. Mr. Shocket continually puts down Bob Backlund by saying Bob "pays" the referees so he can remain champion, and all these pencil-necked geeks believe him and write in to his column just to get on his good side.

Well, I want to say that all this talk about Bob just isn't true! I've seen him defend his title in person and on television many times, and he defends the title with pride. So

PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED
welcomes readers' comments on
any of our stories or columns.

Send your letters to:

BETWEEN FALLS

Box 48

Rockville Centre, NY 11571

come on all you fans of Bob Backlund, write in and tell this Shocket guy and his ignorant followers what you think.

Also Dan, as the song says, "Take off!" But not to the Great White North...even the northerners need a break.

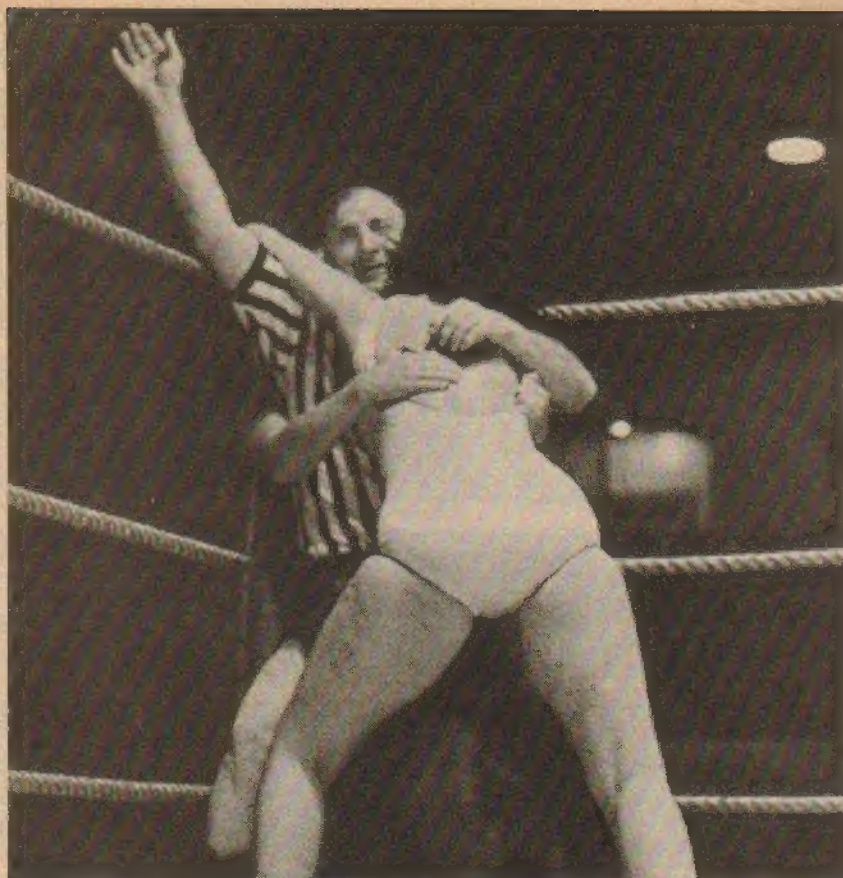
PAUL DRISCOLL
Scarborough, ME

STOP YOUR SOBBING

I would like to comment on your story, "Why Wahoo Must Take The Blame For Turning Ric Flair Into An Unstoppable Monster" (*PWI*, May, 1982).



Wahoo McDaniel pounds away at NWA champion Ric Flair. McDaniel and *PWI* took heavy criticism for an article in the May 1982 issue.



Referee Dick Woherle gasps for air as he is sandwiched between two female wrestlers. Reader Chung Ng commends Woherle for his courageous officiating in the WWF.

For starters, whoever wrote this story should have his pencil broken and his typewriter keys stripped. He has some nerve to write that story. As for that so-called veteran Wahoo McDaniel, what nerve to compare "Nature Boy" with Kabuki. Well, I think Wahoo just can't stand the thought of Ric holding the belt that he could never win.

I've only got one thing to say to Wahoo: You'd better shut up your crying and go chase somebody else, because if I were the "Nature Boy," you wouldn't see another title as long as I held the belt.

MICKY RUNYON
Beech Creek, WV

ADMIRABLE REFEREE

I have been watching wrestling and reading *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* for about two years now, but seldom do I read about referees. I think that referees play an

important, and often overlooked part in wrestling. Although some referees do not do their jobs all the time, I think referee Dick Woherle does his job extremely well. Not many referees will disqualify men like King Kong Mosca, George Steele, or Killer Khan. But Dick Woherle saved wrestler Victor Mercado by disqualifying Mosca. I would like to congratulate Woherle and hope that he continues his great work.

CHUNG NG
Brooklyn, NY

TOMORROW'S CHAMPIONS?

I am very disappointed in the way people think that the combination of Ken Patera and Bobby Duncum will not be the next AWA tag team champs. In my mind, there is no doubt that they will be the next titleholders and will keep those belts for a long time.

As for those AWA fans who call

Bobby "The Brain" Heenan a "weasel" just because some freak with a radio playing old rock music likes making names for excellent wrestlers, I think they're stupid. According to your articles, Patera is only a musclebound rule-breaker. All I have to say is that Patera is a winner. Ken Patera should be ranked higher than that big geek, Hulk Hogan.

Good luck to Ken Patera, Bobby Duncum, and Bobby Heenan. Hang in there, you're number one with a lot of us.

KEVIN KNUEPPEL
Onalaska, WI

JUNKYARD DOG RULES

I think one of the most successful and yet deprived wrestlers in the sport is Junkyard Dog, now wrestling in the Mid-South. Why? Because after all he has accomplished he still has not been given a shot at the NWA title.



Junkyard Dog has worked hard, defeated the best, and now deserves a shot at the NWA title, writes A. Coldman.

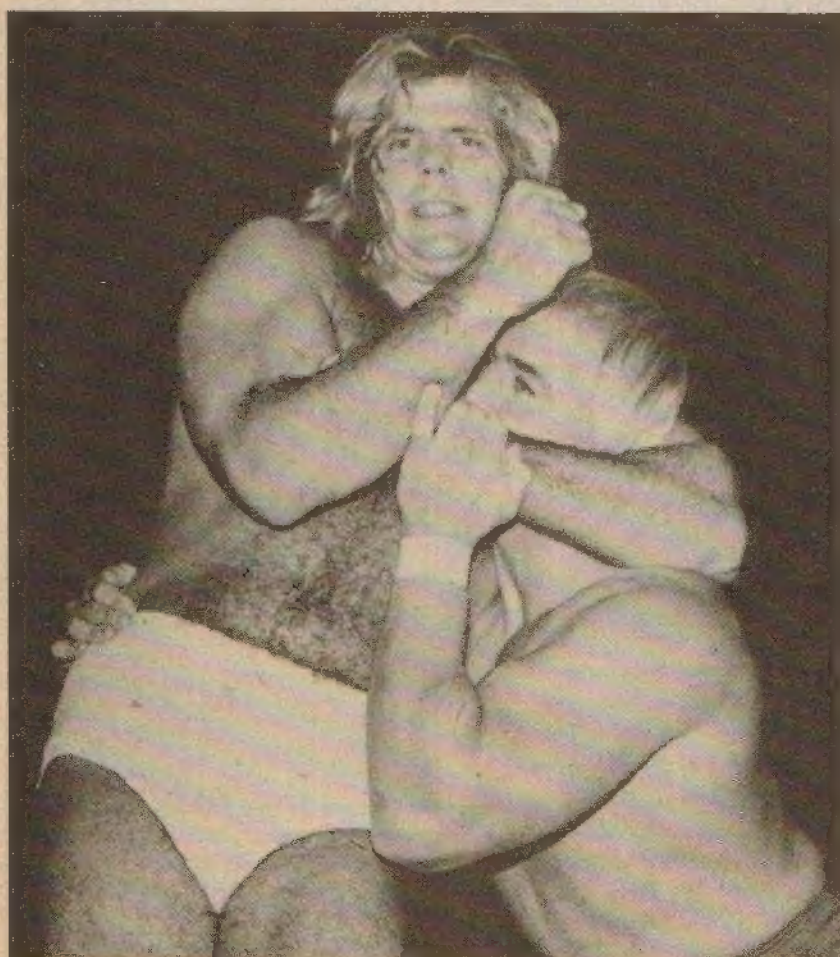
The Dog rules the Mid-South, and I personally have never seen him take a three-count in a one-on-one match, and he has been in this area for over three years. I think any time one man can rule an entire area beating all the big names, he deserves a title shot.

A. COLDMAN
Tchula, MS □

DRESSING ROOM

CONFIDENTIAL

By Stu Saks



After spending years as one of the most despised men in wrestling Michael Hayes can now look into the stands while he wrestles and see the fans urging him on. For the first time in his life, Michael Hayes likes Michael Hayes.

MICHAEL HAYES CAN laugh about it now, but a year ago he was so confused and depressed that he seriously considered giving up wrestling for good.

It was a very lonely period in Michael Hayes' life. He had just severed his ties with The Freebirds, one of the most successful tag teams in the history of Georgia wrestling. He made a small for-

ture as the leader of The Freebirds, but he lacked something that was far more important. He lacked the respect of the wrestling fans and, more importantly, the self-respect that only wrestling within the rules can bring.

After a lengthy legal battle to officially dissolve The Freebird Corporation, Michael Hayes, for the first time in his career, turned to the fans for support. He didn't know what to expect from the fans, and they didn't know how to react to him.

Letters from all across the country flooded our offices either expressing forgiveness for the former rulebreaker or issuing warnings to the wrestlers from whom he was begging trust.

"Frankly," he now admits, "I wouldn't have blamed anybody for not forgiving me. The Freebirds were one of the most ruthless teams in the history of wrestling. We made life pretty damned miserable for a lot of the people in this state."

Hayes smiled and rolled his eyes.

"Let me tell ya, baby, that was a scary time. My old friends hated me, called me Benedict Arnold. And I couldn't make any new friends 'cause they thought I'd clobber them when their backs were turned."

(Continued on page 62)

If you wish to contribute to Shocket's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE
Box 48
Rockville Centre, N.Y.
11571

OFF THE O ROPE

By Dan Shocket

I'M GOING TO say this one more time. I will have it printed in capital letters so it will be easier for my moronic fans to read. I WILL PRINT NO LETTER THAT ENDS, "I DARE YOU TO PRINT THIS." It's a cheap way of getting attention, and I find it beneath contempt. I've said this before, but I still keep receiving these idiotic dares.

And now, some alternate means of employment for Bob Backlund:

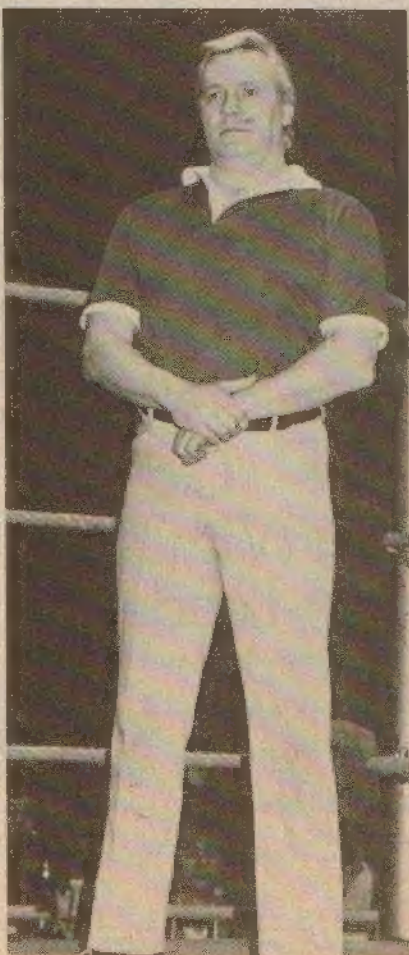
- Parking cars at a junkyard—Edwin Buck, Wakefield, MA
- Stuffing cotton in aspirin bottles—Rosemarie Kessler, Glendale, NY
- Caddy for a miniature golf course—Mark Tompkins, Bergenfield, NJ

And now on to this month's letters.

Dear Dan,

I used to like wrestlers like Bob Backlund and Tony Garea and Pedro Morales. I don't like them anymore.

I recently attended a wrestling match in Springfield, Massachusetts. I saw a rotten, unfair



Pat Patterson will bend over backward to help out his buddy Bob Backlund. Is it my imagination, or are Pat's pockets bulging with money?

bout between WWF champion Bob Backlund and Adrian Adonis. Like everyone else, I rooted for Bob Backlund. However, special guest referee Pat Patterson kept hitting Adonis. I want a fair match. Backlund wouldn't like it if the special guest referee was Fred Blassie.

I suggest a fair title rematch. What's your opinion?

DEBORAH WHITE
Springfield, MA

Dear Deborah,

You're right about Backlund seeking out unfair advantages, but I don't see the cowardly champion ever giving anyone a fair shot at the title. In his arrogance, Backlund has gone too far even for his fans. It's nice to see that they recognize him for the cheating bum he is.

Dear Dan Shocket,

This is a letter to defend Ric Flair, the greatest NWA champ ever. All his so-called friends say he's not fair.

Let's face it, being number one is tough, so you have to get a little tougher mentally and



Perhaps I have underrated Ric Flair a bit. Flair, while not the greatest NWA champion I've ever seen, displays more guts and more desire to win than I thought he could.

physically. That's what the man's done and he's done a good job at that.

He has defended his title against such greats as Harley Race, Tommy Rich, Dusty Rhodes, and many others. He's come out on top each time. Let's give credit where credit is due. The NWA is number one and so is Ric Flair.

T.A. SHAW
Springfield, OH

Mr. T.A. Shaw,

I guess it is time to give Ric Flair a little credit. I've often written that I didn't think he had the guts to make it as champion, but he's done a fair job so far. He's far from the greatest, but he's a lot better than I ever

expected. Any man that can keep Tommy "Wimpcryer" Rich from the title can't be all bad.

Dear Mr. Shocket,

It's a crying shame to insult great wrestlers. We mean Ted DiBiase and Tommy Rich.

You're the only wormslime around here. Just because a lot of decent people root for Ted and Tommy, there's no reason for you, supercrud, to say that they are vile, debased, foul-mouthed wormslime. Hear what we're saying, Mr. Moron?

Why don't you insult your scummy wrestlers? Nobody likes dumb oafs like you, Dan Shocket. You are a public nuisance to the sport of wrestling.

If you're a man (which we seriously doubt), why don't you insult them to their faces? And if you're man enough to do this, send us a picture of you doing it.

And we speak for a lot of fans. Seriously, we think you're crud.
RON LANTIER, JULIE ROLEN,
MARTY VELA, MICHELLE VELA,
TROY BORILL
Crowley, LA



Ted DiBiase makes a living fooling foolish fans into thinking he has talent. He doesn't.

Dear Mob,

How many Louisianans does it take to write a letter? It's a pleasure hearing from y'all. I'm glad I can provide something the yokels of Crowley can do to pass the time.

I suppose down there reading is only reserved for the out-house. In other parts of the country, gang, things printed in a magazine are considered public. What I say I assume is read by the wrestlers.

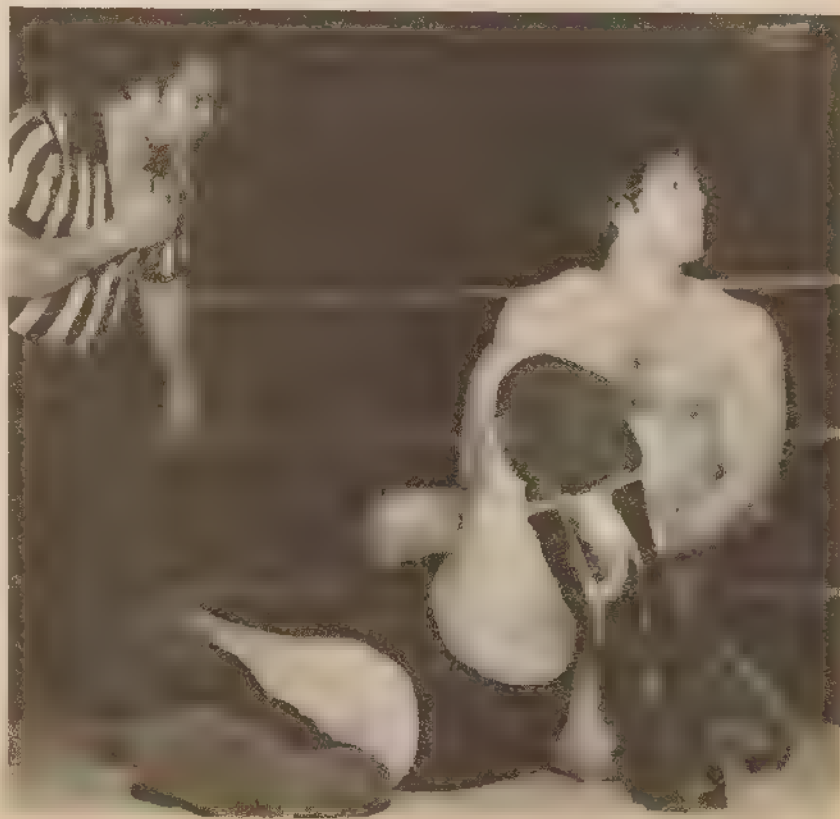
Finally, under no circumstances would I ever send you ill-mannered boors anything. ☐

Every issue, three reporters from **PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED** will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport

PRESS CONFERENCE

RICK MARTEL

(Along with Tony Garea, Rick Martel has held the WWF tag team championship twice. The popular team of Garea and Martel won the belts from The Samoans and from The Moondogs, and since losing the championship to Mr. Fuji and Mr. Saito have made numerous bids to regain the title once again. Fans have claimed for months that Garea and Martel are the true WWF tag team champs, saying that the title would never have changed hands had Fuji not thrown salt in Rick Martel's eyes. All hopes for Martel and Garea reclaiming the title seem to have dissolved, however, as Martel has decided to leave the WWF in favor of the AWA. Stu Saks, Steve Farhood, and Rich Countis recently spoke with Martel.)



"Tony and I sat down and discussed things completely and we came to a mutual agreement about our tag team wrestling . . . We both decided that we wanted a little more freedom. We also wanted to take on some one-on-one matches."



STU SAKS: A lot of people are sorry to see you leave the WWF, Rick.

RICK MARTEL: Yes, Stu, I'm aware of that, and the fans in the WWF have really been fantastic. In a lot of ways I'm going to miss them as much as my mail says they're going to miss me.

STEVE FARHOOD: Why are you leaving, Rick? You and Tony Garea have been the most popular tag team in the WWF in years. It almost seems as if you're leaving while you're on top here, and it doesn't make sense to me.

MARTEL: Well, there are a lot of reasons for my leaving. Some of them I don't particularly want to talk about here, they're kind of personal. But what I can tell you for sure is that Tony and

I sat down and discussed things completely and we came to a mutual agreement about our tag team wrestling. It boiled down to a question of whether we wanted to commit ourselves to another long-term contract here in the WWF, and we both decided that we wanted a little more freedom than that. We also wanted to take on some one-on-one matches, a style of wrestling that we've both neglected too much in our drive to regain the belts from Fuji and Saito.

RICH COUNTIS: How about Bob Backlund? Some people have said that you're discouraged at the fact that Backlund won't give you a title shot. Is this another reason for you leaving the WWF?

MARTEL: Well, I can't

fault Bob for anything, really. He's a tremendous wrestler and a great guy, and I respect him very much. He's had to defend his title against some very tough people over the last four years, and he's always come out on top.

COUNTIS: But a title shot against Nick Bockwinkel in the AWA is going to be easier to get than a shot at Backlund, isn't it?

MARTEL: There's no way I can say, Rich. I haven't approached Bockwinkel yet and I don't have any idea what his reaction will be.

SAKS: It seems to be that you would be comfortable wrestling a man like Nick Bockwinkel, where if it came to the point where you had to wrestle Backlund, it might be difficult because he is your friend.

(Continued on page 64)

JACK BRISCO SURRENDERS DAVID VON ERICH TO EVIL

PHOTOS BY
BILL OTTEN

TURNING OFF HIS headlights, Jack Brisco realized he'd been driving all night. As his car sped down the highway, he began to think about breakfast. He'd wait an hour, stopping for gas and food at the same time. There was still some coffee in his thermos. He took a swig. It tasted bitter.

The radio wasn't helping any. The quiet all-night disc jockeys were turning over the microphones to the cheery morning idiots. He turned it off. He didn't want to hear some clown tell him what a beautiful day it was going to be.

As he journeyed north, Brisco's mind involuntarily turned to what he left behind. For as long as he could, he battled for the soul of David Von Erich. He lost.

He left behind young Von Erich still managed by J.J. Dillon.

Dillon is the kind of guy who fills a young wrestler's head with dreams of championship fortunes. Soon, the kid doesn't care what it takes to achieve that success. Honor, dignity, and scientific wrestling become things that stand in the way of big bucks. David fell under Dillon's spell. It hooks a guy just like drugs and can be just as dangerous.

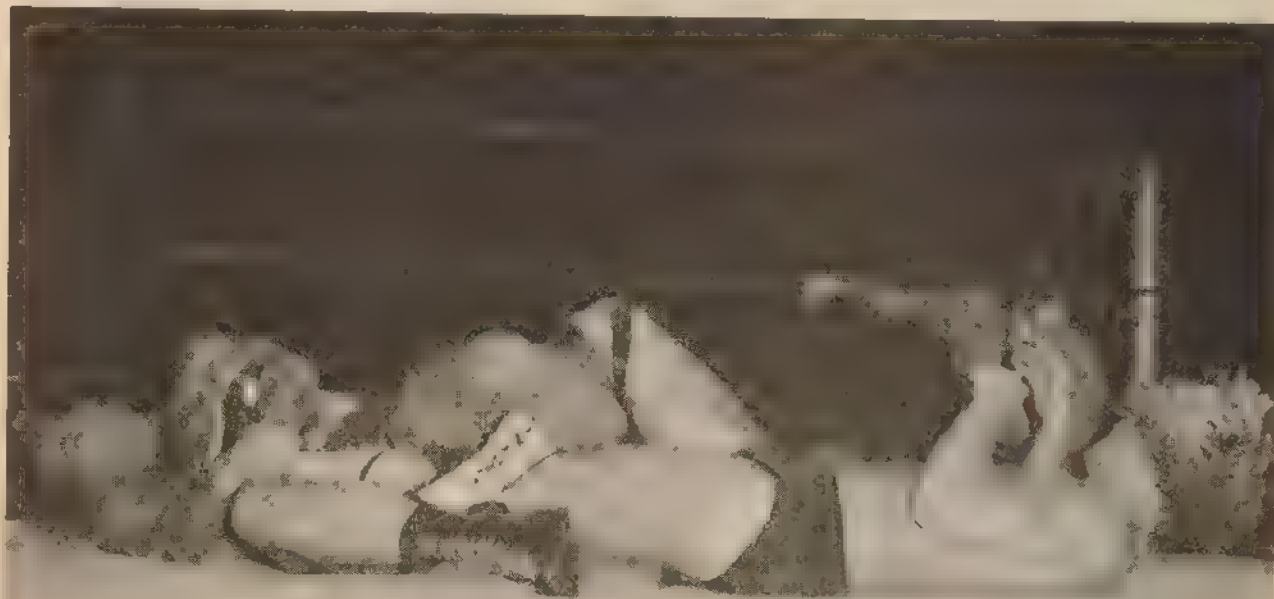
Jack Brisco tried to save him. He failed.

Driving down the highway, Brisco's memory brought back the attempts that did no good, the talks that fell on deaf ears, and the pleas that were greeted with laughter. The memories came in no particular order; it seemed like it was one long, worthless attempt. Dillon's influence was just too strong.

Brisco's recollections were interrupted by a gas gauge that

pointed to 'E.' He pulled off at the first exit that promised gasoline and food. The restaurant was one of those places that seemed to be built the day before yesterday. The cook, Jack thought wearily, probably has been working even a shorter time. Despite the veteran traveler's knowledge that meal would be close to tasteless, Brisco sat down and ordered ham and eggs. Not much damage can be done with them.

Within a half-hour, Brisco was back in his car. The breakfast wasn't bad, and the waitress had recognized him. That meant the coffee was fresh, because she wanted Jack Brisco to have the best. It's good to have fans, Brisco thought with a smile, as he put the plastic container of coffee on the seat next to him. Within two minutes, he was back on the highway.



Brisco could not force Von Erich to submit to his figure-four leglock, just as he could not force Von Erich to submit to intense pressure to split with J.J. Dillon.

It may have been the most important battle in Jack Brisco's life—and he lost it. The stakes were the future of David Von Erich, and though he may never know it, Von Erich was the biggest loser of all



Von Erich slams his Southern championship belt against the side of Brisco's face. As long as Von Erich holds that belt, there seems to be no chance of talking him into changing his ways

Four hours later, he was ready for a new tank of gasoline. He was getting tired, so he pulled into a motel and took a room. A quick shower and then some sleep.

Yeah, sleep during the day and work at night, Jack thought, that's how you can tell you're a veteran wrestler.

After his shower, Jack fell on

the bed. He put a quarter into the machine on the headrest and the bed started vibrating. Brisco slowly drifted off to sleep.

His dreams were filled with anguish. He was wrestling Von Erich, who turned into Dillon, who turned into a devil, who laughed at Brisco and wrapped the wrestler in chains. Soon, the crowd in the arena joined the laughter. Everyone in the crowd had J.J. Dillon's face.

Brisco woke up groggy. He wondered how long the nightmares would haunt him. Failures tend to affect him that way. It's funny, but no matter how long he is a professional athlete, he just can't get used to losing. And his loss of David Von Erich was one of his saddest defeats.

It was a brutal match from the first. Brisco was determined to prove to David that scientific wrestling could lead to victory. He was brilliant, but Dillon wasn't about to let him win. The wily manager had prepared his wrestler well. Von Erich's tactics were savagely illegal. Even though Brisco battled magnificently, he couldn't overcome the odds. When he came close to winning, Von Erich started cheating so flagrantly he was disqualified. Dillon had taught his pupil well. Nothing Brisco could do would change anything.

That evening, Brisco got back in his car. He had places to go. He may not be able to save David Von Erich for himself, but Jack didn't have to stick around and watch the destruction of a decent young man.

We all meet J.J. Dillons in life, Jack mused. Some of us are smart enough or lucky enough to run the other way. Others lose more than they ever know. Maybe there's still hope for Von Erich, but it won't come from Jack Brisco.

Jack Brisco was headed north. □

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

Every month, our reporters will compile wrestlers' most revealing quotes. Often catching the grapplers with their guards down, our reporters will work endlessly in obtaining interesting quotes on a variety of subjects

JIMMY VALIANT

"The time has come, babies, the boogie-woogie man is gonna boggie-woogie all over that bald head of one Mr. Ivan Koloff. That's right, brothers and sisters, this man Koloff thinks he's going to put handsome Jimmy out of action, but I've got a thing or two up my own boogie-woogie sleeves."



JESSE VENTURA

"I've had it. These idiots here in the WWF don't know the first thing about how to wrestle. There's no competition for me here, and I can't get a decent title shot against Backlund and they won't give Adonis and me a shot at the tag team belts. I tell you, I've had it. First chance I get, I'm outta here."



DUSTY RHODES

"I'm telling you, that slime-boy Piper and that big-boy Ole are going to pay, my friends. That's right, they're going to pay dearly because this is a battle that has gotten bigger and badder than the two of them think they are. It's me and the Animal Steele, now, and Ole and Piper better watch out."



TONY GAREA

"Rick Martel deserves all the luck in the world in the AWA. A lot of people are asking me if we had a fight, if we are bitter towards each other. Absolutely not. We agreed to break up the team, and it was a decision that we talked about for a long time. I regret losing Rick as a partner, but I'm looking forward to wrestling solo once again."



(Continued on page 51)

THE AWA SHEIKS: BUYING THEIR WAY TO THE TITLE?



THERE ARE TIMES in every journalist's life when he has to come face to face with a subject or a person that he absolutely despises. It's not a matter of choice, but a necessary part of the job. One of my first editors once told me, "Matt," he said, "you gotta rub elbows with the scum to really know what's going on in the world."

Unfortunately, he was right.

By Matt Brock

That's what makes this assignment doubly tough. It's a tag team I'm talking about, and frankly I'd rather not bother recognizing them as wrestlers at all. I figure maybe if I ignore them, they might just go away.

No such luck.

Ayatollah Sheik Crusher Jerry Blackwell and his mentor Ayatol-

lah Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie...or is it Sheik Ayatollah...or maybe it's...well, whatever it is or whoever they are, these two grapplers are spreading money and mayhem all across the AWA tag team circuit.

Especially money. Kaissie has got to be the wealthiest man in all of wrestling, and he likes to spend what he's got. Gave a harem to Blackwell for starters. Minneap-

Ayatollah Sheik Blackwell and Ayatollah Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie are engaged in a do-or-die quest for the AWA tag team belts. Their allies are strength, experience, ability . . . and money. Lots of money. Veteran reporter Matt Brock examines how this money might net this duo a championship



Though Blackwell and Al-Kaissie have enormous talent, talent might not be the key to winning the AWA tag team title from Jim Brunzell and Greg Gagne. The 500-pound Blackwell tests Brunzell's stomach muscles (left). Al-Kaissie traps former Olympian Brad Rheingans in an abdominal stretch (above).

olis St. Paul wrestling promoter slaps a five grand fine on Kaissie and all he does is laugh in Karbo's face.

That's a big problem, especially for any opponents of Kaissie and Blackwell. Money may not be able to buy love, but it can put one or two referees in your hip pocket if the ante is hefty enough. And there's no question that Kaissie has the green to hefty up the ante.

Anyway, enough of all that. I'm here to tell you that I found myself in Minneapolis talking to Kaissie recently. He looks like a Sheik, all right, and that satanic beard and moustache don't help my nerves much, either, when I talk to this guy.

I hated every minute of it, actually. In the back of my mind I kept thinking political thoughts. Every time I did, I felt like smacking this

guy in the teeth a few dozen times or just getting the hell out of there and soaking my brain with some good grain.

Professionalism rules, I'm afraid, and I was able to do neither. "Remember, he's only a wrestler," I kept telling myself, "just deal with him on the athletic level and get out of here."

So I sat down in a dressing
(Continued on page 50)

PHOTOS BY BILL OTTEN & LARRY BARNHIZER

Roddy Piper Threatens PWI

A typographical error on the cover of our August 1982 issue so enraged Roddy Piper that he felt compelled to vent his anger in person. Editor-in-Chief Peter King found himself on the receiving end of Piper's tantrums and threats . . . and finds himself on Piper's permanent list of enemies



"GET MY NAME RIGHT OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!"

By Peter King

I HAVE NEVER experienced anything like it in all my years as a wrestling magazine editor. I hope I never have to go through anything like it again.

It was a typically busy Monday morning. Deadline was Tuesday, so there was no time to waste. Telephone calls had to be made, stories edited, copy checked, photographs okayed; in short, all the 1,001 details that go into the production of a magazine like

Pro Wrestling Illustrated had to be taken care of.

The phone rang and the secretary buzzed twice—that's the signal that the call is for me. I picked up the line, said "hello," and heard the click of a receiver being placed back on the phone.

It's an old trick, one which newspaper reporters used to use quite a bit simply to see if someone they wanted to speak with was home or not. Burglars use it

to check if anyone is home in the house they want to rob. I paid no attention to it. I was far too busy.

About an hour or so later, as I was editing a story about "Superfly" Jimmy Snuka and Bob Backlund, I heard a loud commotion in the outer office. The secretaries were screaming at someone who was screaming back even louder.

"I want to see Peter King right now," the voice screamed, "I

Piper assaults the August 1982 issue of PWI. An intact version showing the unfortunate typographical error is inset.





After Piper was disqualified for choking Dusty Rhodes into unconsciousness, he filed an official protest with the NWA. It takes very little to send Piper into a rage, as PWI Editor-in-Chief Peter King found out.

don't care how busy he is, I flew up all the way from Atlanta and I want to see him immediately!"

Roughly three seconds later, a very agitated Roddy Piper stormed up to my desk and threw a manila envelope into my lap.

"Okay, what's the meaning of this?" he asked, spitting out each syllable with disgust. "What are

you guys up to? Payoffs? Is that it? Getting checks from Tommy Rich and the Armstrongs? Maybe Dusty Rhodes? Getting paid to make a fool out of me?"

I told him to calm down a minute and tell me what this was all about. "Open the envelope," Piper said, "that should make things clear enough."

When I opened the manila envelope, shreds of paper fell out and into my hands. There was also a roll of undeveloped film.

"What's all this?" I asked.

"That's a copy of your rag, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*," Piper said with contempt.

"What's this film?" I asked.

(Continued on page 66)

CLOSE-UP



BLACKJACK MULLIGAN JR. is a young mat star with a brilliant future. . . The Sweetwater, Texas, native began wrestling at West Texas State while in college. . . Also played football while in school. . . Often wrestled under the name Barry Windham because he did not want to be judged as riding on his father's coattails. . . At 6'5", 230 pounds, Mulligan Jr. displays a streamlined efficiency in the ring. . . Began as a referee, learning many of the ins and outs of wrestling prior to his professional debut in Salt Lake City. . . First gained national attention while in Florida. Along with Mike Graham, won the Florida tag team belts from R.T. Tyler and Bobby Jagers. . . Once defeated Mr. Saito in a rugged brawl to win the Florida TV title. . . Teamed with Dick Murdoch in Florida until Murdoch was hired by Sir Oliver Humperdink to turn on the young grappler. . . Defeated Dory Funk Jr. for the Florida title in West Palm Beach on January 12, 1981. . . Two months later he was in an auto accident. . . Signed a

rematch with Dory Jr. but was unable to show because of injuries and forfeited the title. . . Found himself locked in a brutal feud against Magnificent Muraco in Florida. . . Moved to the Mid-Atlantic and Georgia areas. . . Just before leaving Florida, he admitted he was the son of Blackjack Mulligan, feeling his reputation had already been made. . . Teamed with his father in Tennessee, Georgia, and the Mid-Atlantic. . . Won the Mid-Southern title. . . Is now putting on more muscle and weight in preparation for an attack on the U.S. title held by Sgt. Slaughter. . . Would also like a title shot against Ric Flair. . . Asserted his independence from his father once again when Mulligan Sr. moved to the WWF as a rulebreaker. . . Toughened up his attitude when longtime friend Wayne Farris turned on him. . . Currently engaged in a major feud with John Studd. . . Hailed by six-time NWA heavyweight champion Harley Race as one of the greatest young competitors in wrestling today. □

PRO **Wrestling**
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**BLACKJACK
MULLIGAN JR.**

Second-Generation Superstar





PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

CLOSE-UP



GREATEST MATCH

"Without a doubt, my greatest match was against Ric Flair. In a lot of ways I admire Flair, and it was a tremendous boost to my career to be able to have had a title shot at such a young age and at such an early point in my career. Obviously I didn't win the title, but I felt good in that match, and I think I gave Flair a good run for his money. I'm happy with that match."



TOUGHEST OPPONENT

"When I step into that ring against an opponent, I want to make sure that he's someone I can handle, someone that I can analyze his style and formulate an offense. Well, Sgt. Slaughter is a total maniac, a completely unpredictable wrestler, and you never know what he's going to do next. That alone makes him the toughest opponent I've faced."

MOST HATED OPPONENT

"It's really a shame, you know, because at one time I really trusted Wayne Farris. He used to be a good friend of mine. But the sleeperhold is something you don't fool with, and when I saw that Wayne was getting too brutal on someone and told him to release the hold, he refused. Then he turned against me. It really taught me something about the value of friendship."



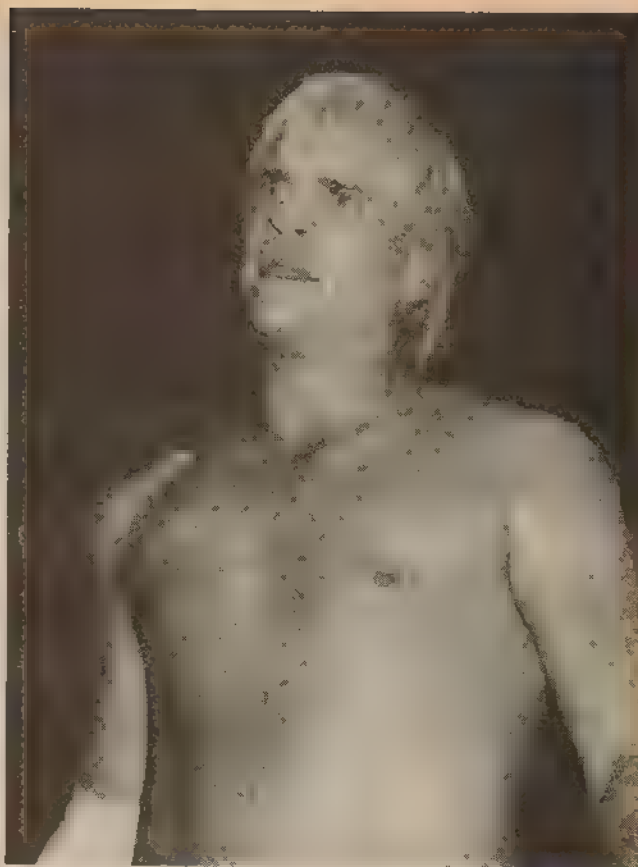
FAVORITE MANEUVER

"Well, like I said earlier, the sleeperhold is not something you can fool around with, but I would have to say that it's my favorite maneuver. Used properly, it can be an extremely effective weapon against an opponent and can make the difference between winning or losing a match. The problem comes when people don't respect the power of the sleeper and abuse it. It can really hurt people."



WANTED

Ambushed by both Gino Hernandez and Tully Blanchard. Defeated for the Georgia National championship by Buzz Sawyer. Tommy Rich's career has been on a severe downslide lately, and it appears as if only the help of a competent manager can reverse the trend before his career is permanently destroyed



A MAN TO MANAGE TOMMY RICH

TOMMY RICH'S CAREER is in serious trouble. It's not a matter of attitude toward the fans anymore. Tommy has made peace with his fans. It's not a matter of a title taking over his personality, because he's lost the Georgia National title

It's a problem of direction. Tommy Rich is in desperate need of a manager. If Rich had a knowledgeable man directing his career, he might still be the Georgia National champion. If Rich had someone to anticipate problems before they arose, he might not be in as much trouble as he's been in recently.

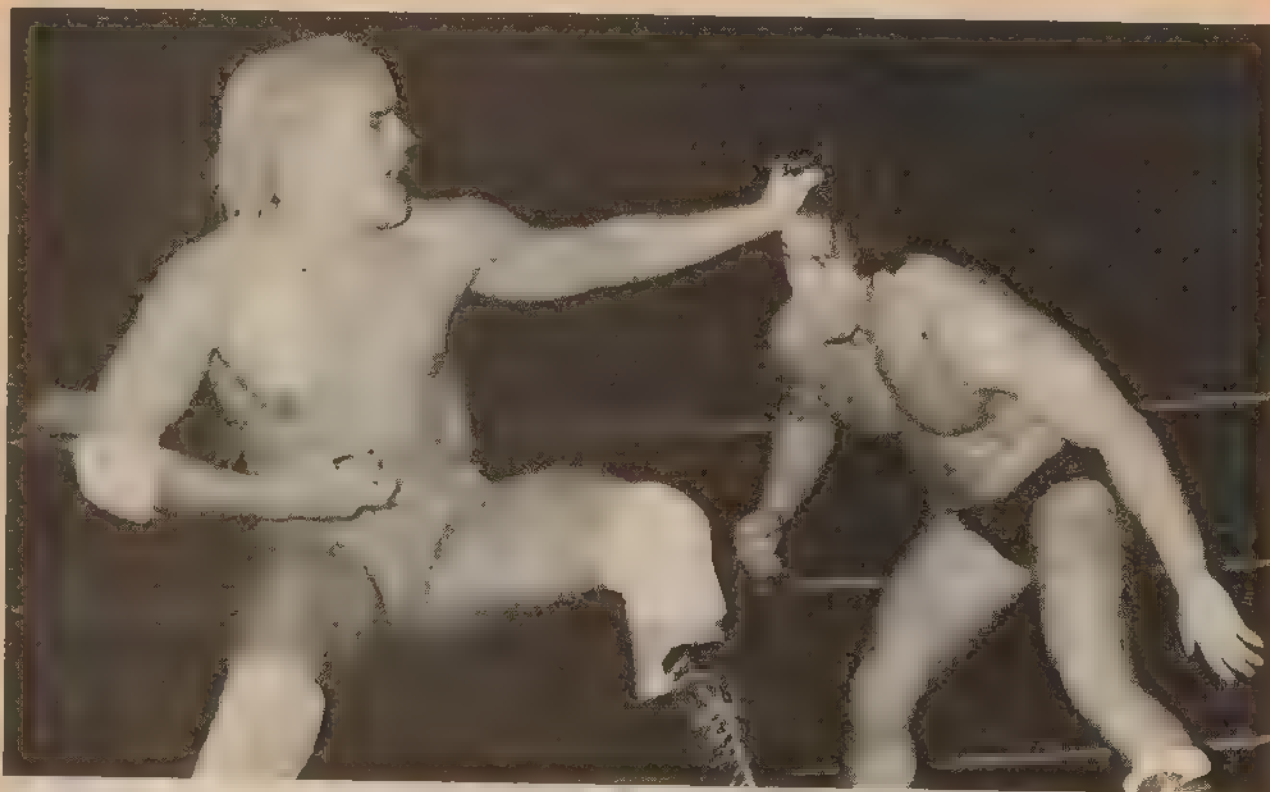
One incident springs to mind immediately as an obvious example of Tommy's dilemma: his current problems in San Antonio, Texas

Some months ago, Rich had a title shot against AWA champion

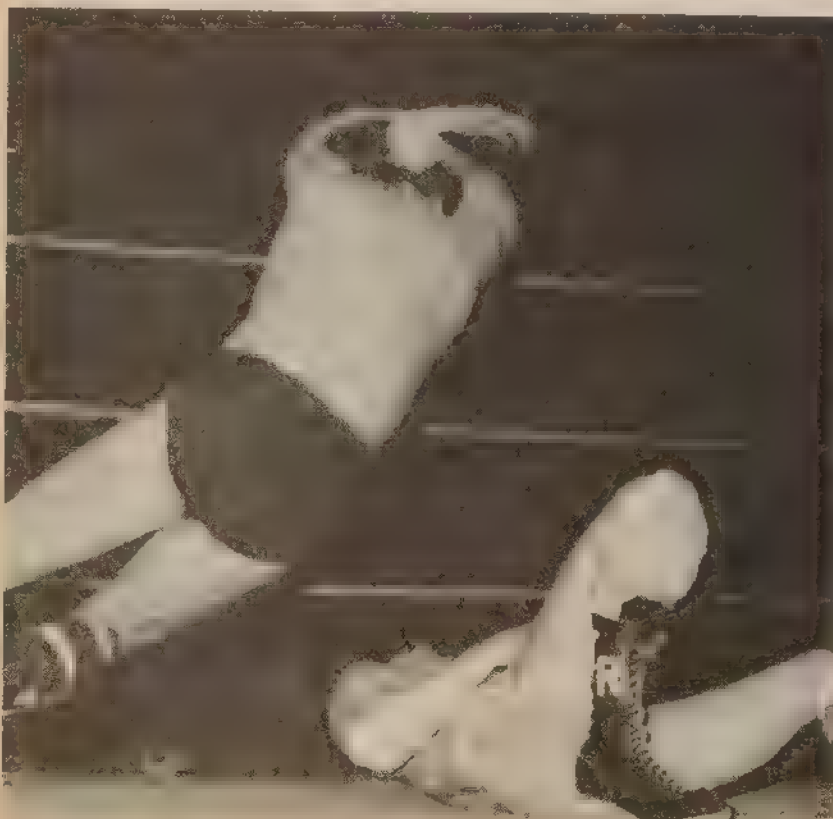


Can Tommy Rich hope to successfully guide his own career? Many experts think not. Gino Hernandez plants his knee in Tommy's face during a match in San Antonio.

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER



Rich lost a great opportunity to capture the AWA championship when Hernandez attacked him from behind as he held Nick Bockwinkel in a sleeperhold. Tommy doubtlessly has this in mind as he fires a right hand at Gino (above). Tully Blanchard takes aim at a fallen Rich (below).



Nick Bockwinkel Observers at ringside noted that Rich wrestled one of his strongest matches in years, actually bringing Bockwinkel to the brink of losing his title.

Suddenly, Gino Hernandez ran in and disrupted the contest, and in the eyes of many observers, cost Rich the title. Wildfire was enraged, swearing vengeance against Hernandez.

A Texas Death Match was signed between these two men to settle the conflict.

From the opening bell, both men were wrestling as if their very careers depended on the outcome of the match. In a sense, they did.

For Tommy Rich, it was a matter of clearing the air, of proving to the world that he was good enough to beat the man who cost him his victory against Bockwinkel.

For Hernandez, it was also a matter of pride. He wanted to prove to the fans that given a chance, he could defeat the man who held the Georgia National title a number of times, who is such a fan favorite, who basks in the glow of the spotlight that he himself

long for.

But the details of the match itself do not concern us so much as the fact that at the end of the match, Rich was again the victim of an ambush by a third party.

In this case, Tully Blanchard came charging into the ring to attack Rich when it appeared as if he had scored a clear victory over Hernandez. Blanchard smashed Wildfire with a series of devastating elbowsmashes.

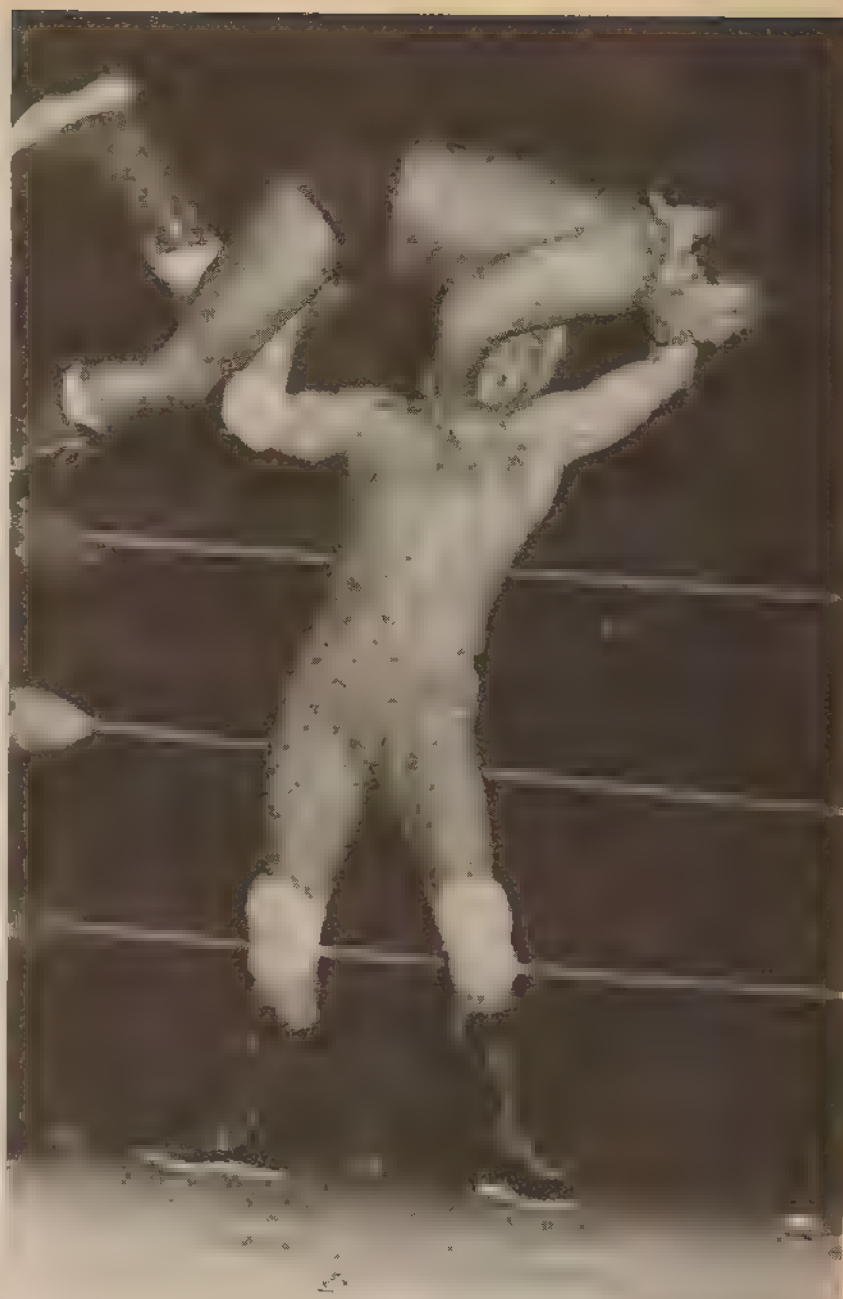
It is clear from the incident in the Bockwinkel match and in the meeting with Hernandez that Tommy Rich needs someone to manage him.

A manager would be able to prevent someone like Gino Hernandez or Tully Blanchard from running into the ring during a match. If necessary, a manager could sign Rich to a match where somebody like Hernandez, who might be expected to ambush Rich for any reason, would be barred from ringside or, in an extreme case, from the building.

A manager would be able to assure that Tommy Rich stays in top physical and mental condition, preparing himself for every match he signs. Clearly, Rich was not well prepared for the challenge of Buzz Sawyer in the Omni in Atlanta recently. The result was that Rich lost his Georgia National title to the challenger.

We're not saying that Tommy is a helpless wrestler alone. This is certainly not the case, as Rich has so often proved in the past. What we are saying is that two heads are better than one, and that perhaps Tommy Rich is overburdened lately. Perhaps the running feud with Roddy Piper is beginning to take its toll. Perhaps the long string of challengers to the Georgia title, which unfortunately ended with the loss to Buzz Sawyer, also took its toll on Wildfire.

A manager would be able to make sure that Tommy Rich paced



Tommy removes Hernandez from the top turnbuckle and flings him across the ring. Rich cannot be expected to wrestle up to his full capacity if he has to also arrange his own schedule, work out his own strategy, and protect himself from outside interference.

himself, that he prepared himself for an opponent in the proper manner, and that he didn't sign into a match where ambushes became more than possible... they became probable.

Look at other examples: in the WWF, Bob Backlund has held the title for over four years with the aid of Arnold Skoaland. In the AWA Nick Bockwinkel's manager Bobby Heenan has had a pronounced ef-

fect on the champion's title reign. In the NWA, Ric Flair, who does not have a manager, seems to be faltering in his title defenses.

Please, Tommy, if you are reading this: Consider our suggestion carefully. Get yourself a manager, and make sure that he is knowledgeable and trustworthy. You could be a world champion, but alone you're under too much pressure. You deserve better. □

JUNE 1982

VOLUME III, No. 9

*****WRESTLING***** *****ENQUIRER*****

FINALISTS SET FOR NWA WORLD TAG TEAM TOURNAMENT

BY BILL APTER

CHARLOTTE, NC—East meets West soon to decide who will wear the NWA World Tag Team championship belts.

Representing the East will be Ole Anderson and Stan Hansen, a team that has been together for some time and has wrestled throughout Georgia.

Opposing Anderson and Hansen and representing the

West is the surprise team of the tournament, Don Muraco and Wahoo McDaniel.

At press time, the final round of the tournament has yet to begin, but the series promises to be a historical one with the winners walking away with one of the most coveted prizes in all of sport.



The finalists in the NWA World Tag Team Tournament (clockwise from top left): Magnificent Muraco and Wahoo

ANDRE'S FEUD WITH BLACKJACK

MULLIGAN INTENSIFIES

BY PETER KING

ALLENTOWN, PA.—In every one of Blackjack Mulligan's matches, fans in attendance have picked up the chant: "Andre, Andre, Andre," and "We want Andre."

GARVIN TURNS BAD, JOINS DILLON'S STABLE

BY SIEVE FARHOOD

WEST PALM BEACH, FL.—Jim Garvin has become the latest addition to King James Dillon's stable of wrestlers.

"Dillon has done a lot for me already," said Garvin in a recent interview. "He's taught me new moves and maneuvers I never imagined existed. The counter-moves and tactics that I've learned already from Dillon have improved my ring skills tremendously."

"After all," Garvin said, "I'm the Florida champion, now!

The inevitable meeting between these two giant power-houses will prove to be one of the most stunning conflicts in WWF history.

"Everybody is always screaming how Andre the Giant is the people's champion," sneered Mulligan. "Well, he's no champion. He's nothing but a freak. I'm going to expose him for the worthless sideshow attraction that he is, and I'm going to use my clawhold to do it."

"I don't care if Andre reads this and is forewarned," added Mulligan. "There's nothing he can do in defense of my claw, anyway!"



Jim Garvin smiles approvingly as David Von Erich shouts obscenities at the fans. Garvin is the latest addition to James Dillon's stable.

Dillon helped me win that belt, and he's going to help me keep it."

Garvin defeated Mr. Wrestling II in May to win the Florida title.

FATHER AND SON TEAM OF HENNIGS SHOWS PROMISE



Young Curt Hennig has joined his father, Larry, in Portland, Oregon, and the two have performed extremely well in combination.

BY STU SAKS

PORTLAND, OR.—Veteran wrestler Larry Hennig and his son, former WWF star Curt Hennig, have formed a tag team here in the Pacific Northwest and have become one of the most skilled pairs of competitors anywhere.

In a recent contest against the team of Matt Bourne and Dizzy Hogan, the Hennigs displayed a sense of timing and a style that was far beyond the short months they have teamed together.

They look superb now, and they should improve in the months to come. The Hennigs are a team that deserves close attention and strong support from the fans.

AROUND THE GLOBE

ALLENTOWN, PA

In what is regarded as a very surprising move, Captain Lou Albano has agreed to let his WWF tag team champions, Mr. Fuji and Mr. Saito, grapple the Strongbow brothers, Jay and Jules Albano, a man who usually likes to wheel and deal, said money is no object and that his champions are ready.

MEMPHIS, TN

"King" Jerry Lawler and his rival, Dutch Mantell, have decided to stop feuding, pool their talents, and become a tag team. They could become the biggest threat to AWA Southern tag team champions Steve Keirn and Bill Dundee.

TAMPA, FL

The "American Dream," Dusty Rhodes, has returned to the Sunshine State and he is making things miserable for J.J. Dillon and his stable of wrestlers. Dillon's main man, Kendo Nagasaki, vows to cripple Rhodes with the use of ancient martial arts moves.

AMARILLO, TX

Ted DiBiase is in special training for an upcoming match against NWA champion Ric Flair. Ted, who has grappled the champion before, is in the best shape of his life and is considered a live underdog.

LOOKING AT...

Matt Brock:



ALL I HAVE to do is think about Tehuantepec, and I get the tequila hangover all over again.

It's a place in the south of Mexico, and I went there about eight months ago with Peters trying to dig up the story on El Canek. We got the story all right, but we must have consumed half of the country's mezcal inventory doing so.

I'll say it right from the top. El Canek is good. Very good. Picture Mil Mascaras in his rookie years. Picture style and grace coupled with honor and sportsmanship in the ring.

Now picture Lou Thesz taking a young man like this and teaching him the ropes.

You see, Thesz wrestled Canek three years ago. It happened when Thesz won the Mexican title in 1979. The two of them wrestled in front of a sellout crowd of 22,000 at the Palacio Desportes Olympic Stadium. It was a disputed decision and both men were declared champions.

A few months later, a rematch was set up. To see a rookie like Canek wrestle an awesome veteran like Thesz was a sight in itself,

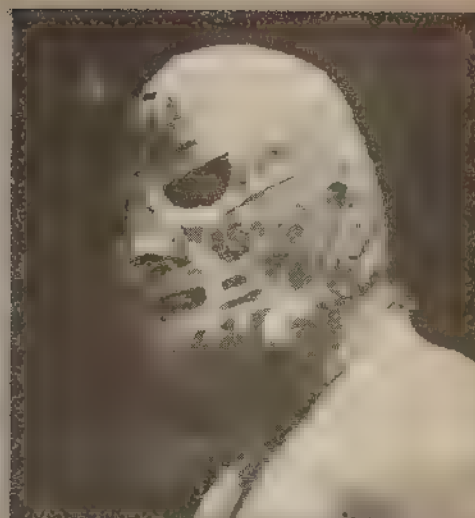


El Canek stuns Manny Fernandez—and everyone in the arena—with a headfirst dive through the ropes. The daring Mexican is more than willing to make physical sacrifices in quest of victory.

but when Canek started to display a veteran's sensibilities and moves, a veteran's attitude in the ring, he took everyone by surprise. Particularly Thesz. Canek won the match.

Thesz came out of that match so impressed by Canek, however, that he made him an offer. Lou wanted to train Canek to mold his raw talent into a refined master of the squared circle.

EL CANEK



El Canek wisely accepted the offer. After all, it isn't every day that a six-time NWA heavyweight champion and acknowledged legend in his own time offers to pass on his extensive knowledge and experience to you. He'd be a damned fool not to accept.

Now El Canek is wrestling in Texas, and often travels to his native Mexico to wrestle there as well. About a year ago, he made a one match trip into the WWF to wrestle at Madison Square Garden and stunned the fans there by performing a breathtaking dive through the ropes and onto his opponent who was on the floor about 10 feet from the ring. The word is that negotiations are under way to bring El Canek back to the WWF area for an extended period of time, but nothing definite has been set up so far.

Thesz continues to train El Canek, and the masked wrestler continues to improve. Like fine Scotch, he's getting better with age, and the experience he's gaining in the ring each year is adding additional skills to an already impressive array of moves and maneuvers.



Canek is blessed with as much natural talent as any man in wrestling. Now, under the tutelage of the legendary Lou Thesz, his holds and maneuvers are being honed to perfection.

What's most amazing about El Canek is that although he's been on the scene for only a short time, you would never know it from watching him in action. He's exciting, he's flamboyant,

he's athletic, he's gymnastic, he's being trained by the best in the sport, and he's got a hell of a career ahead of him. I only hope I'm still around to see most of it.

Superfly Snuka Bombarbs The WWF



CAN BOB BACKLUND RECOVER FROM THIS HIDEOUS BEATING?

IT WAS THREE days after the fact and the images were as clear in my mind's eye as the very moment it all happened. I kept trying to make some sort of sense out of it all, but I was failing miserably. The champion had faced the madman, and I had felt like a war correspondent on the front lines.

I wandered aimlessly around the mall and found myself sitting at the bar ordering a 14 from Bert before I realized where I was and

By Craig Peters

what I was doing. As I took the first swig of my 7-and-7, I looked to the end of the bar; Reggie, Andy, and Little Bobby were rolling the poker dice. I didn't feel like playing at all. I didn't even feel like pumping quarters into the Pac-Man machine.

"C'mon, roll the dice a few times, that'll get you going." Little

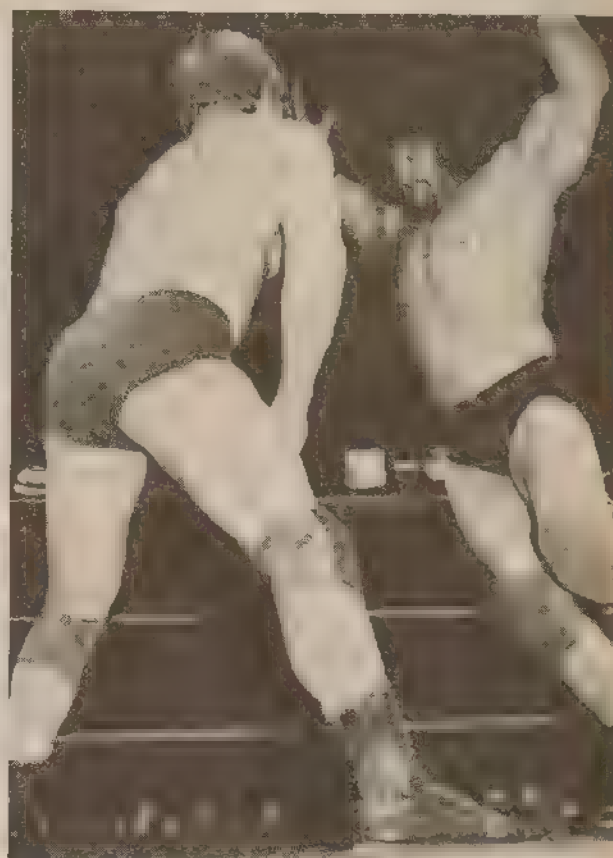
Bobby loves to play the dice, and as far as he's concerned, the more in the game the more to win. I said I just didn't feel like it.

"Backlund the other night... it was the first time that he's been carried out on a stretcher." The words were spoken empty and without feeling, but the dice game stopped as I said them.

"I've never seen anything like it," I continued. "That guy Snuka is incredible. His Madison Square

PHOTOS BY CRAIG PETERS

It was an evening of nightmarish terror for Bob Backlund: He came into the ring confident he could turn back the challenge of Jimmy Snuka . . . and came out of the ring on a stretcher. It seems, however, that the WWF champion's trouble with Snuka are only beginning



Snuka smiles his evil smile as he senses his control over Backlund (above left). The challenger has the champion lined up for a devastating diving headbutt (above right). Backlund, under the care of a physician and paramedic, is carried on a stretcher to the ambulance (below).



Garden debut and he charged into that match and into Backlund like Bob was a rookie."

I motoned for another 14 as the dice players asked for more information. "I heard Snuka was coming to the Garden," Little Bobby said, "but I didn't hear what happened. Fill us in, man!"

Another pair of gulps from the 7-and 7 and I was ready to tell the story . . . again. Why not? I had been running the scenario through my mind for three days.

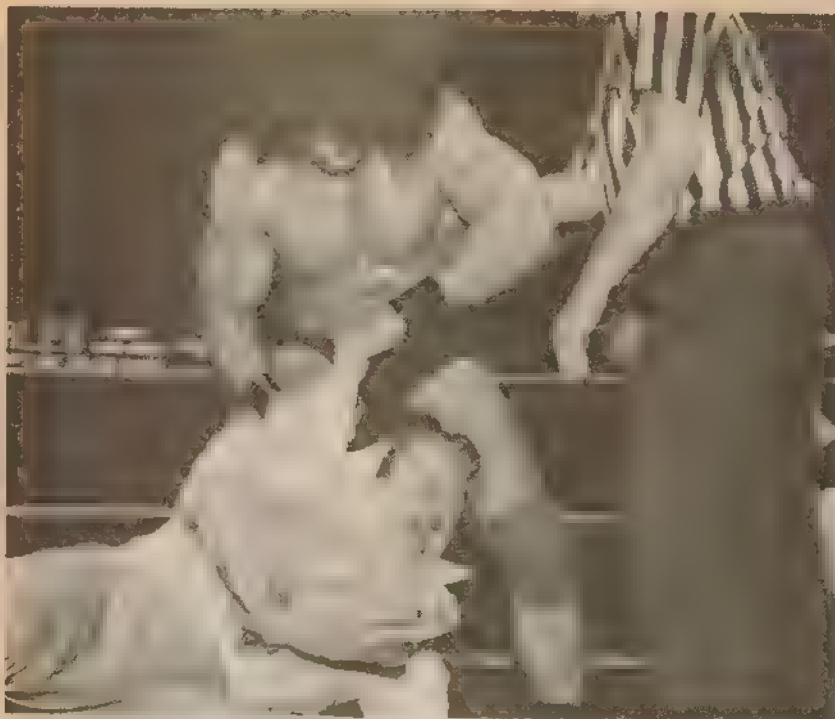
"Snuka came into the ring and it was like he had no idea at all of

where he was," I said. "He was staring into the rafters, out into the crowd . . . it was clearly a completely new experience for him.

"From the start, this guy looked like he was overdosing on adrenalin," I continued. "He really is a madman in the ring."

"I've seen him on TV," Little Bobby said. "You better believe he's a madman."

"Television?" I asked, "Well, forget it. Anything you've seen on TV doesn't even come close to matching what this guy is like in the ring. He tore into Backlund



Snuka's aggressiveness was not limited to his opponent. Backlund's manager, Arnold Skoaland, was assaulted when he climbed onto the ring apron to warn Backlund that Snuka had an object (above). Backlund regains a degree of consciousness before being taken to the hospital in the ambulance (below)



like there was no tomorrow. Kneedrops, elbowsmashes, headclaws, karate chops...and of course, he used flying bodypresses all over the place.

"The only offensive move Backlund was able to put together," I noted, "was a single piledriver. Even so, he was so weak from Snuka's onslaught that it had no effect at all.

"Then Snuka pulled something out of his trunks," I continued, "and at that time Backlund's manager, Arnold Skoaland, came up to the ring apron and tried to warn Backlund about the foreign object. Snuka turned..."

I stopped and drained my 7-and-7 and Bert refilled my glass. I took a bracer and continued the story.

"I swear, his eyes were glazed over with animal fury. He forgot all about Backlund and attacked Skoaland as if he were the titleholder. Dragged him into the ring, ripped his clothes...he really did a number on the man."

"What about Backlund?" asked Reggie.

"Well, he hit the referee three times while trying to get to Snuka as he was attacking Skoaland," I said, "and that disqualified him. When Snuka was done with Skoaland, he turned and attacked Backlund again with a bodyslam and a flying bodypress. Backlund was out cold

"The referee tried to wake Backlund up," I continued, "but there was no response. Two medical officers came in with the stretcher and tied him down. As they carried him out...I don't know, I guess it was the horror of the match which got him, or maybe it was some sort of fever dream which burned itself into Backlund's soul...whatever it was, he woke up on the stretcher, strained against his bonds as if he were insane, and let loose a bloodcurdling scream that sent a chill of terror down my spine.



Then he passed out cold again."

Bert, Little Bobby, Reggie, and Andy were silent. They seemed to be imagining the scene in their minds, but nothing they could have imagined would have even come close to the reality of the situation.

"I followed the medics back to the ambulance," I said, "and Backlund was still out cold. Doctors attended to him, checking his heart, his blood pressure, his bones to make sure nothing was broken."

I took a pensive drink of my 7-and-7. "The only thing they couldn't check was his mind."

"His mind?" someone asked

"Well... something must have really sunk its claws into Backlund's mind to cause him to scream out like that after having passed out completely. It's terrifying to even imagine what he must have gone through, but from what I saw, it must have been pure torture to him."

The bar was silent. I'm sure everyone else was thinking the same thing I was: Could Backlund pull himself together on the rebound? Will he ever recover? After all, his self confidence has to be shaken: a stretcher case for the first time ever as champion! It's got to have a devastating effect on the man.

For the first time in four years, I believe, Bob Backlund has tasted the bitterness of fear. It will either make him stronger, or cost him the title.

"It's going to be a hell of a rematch," somebody said. I finished my third drink of the night and tossed a fiver on the bar. For the first time in four years, Backlund did not walk out of the ring under his own power. For the first time in four years, his title appeared to be in serious jeopardy.

That somebody was right... it's going to be a hell of a rematch. □



The Sheiks

(Continued from Page 31)

room with Kaissie and started drilling him with questions. All through the interview he had this smug grin on his face, the kind of look that's reserved for OPEC ministers when they raise the price of oil another fin per barrel. I don't mind telling you, I really felt like a couple of left hooks might wipe that spit-eating grin away.

Right. Professionalism. Oh well, you can't win them all.

Kaissie gave me some of his personal history, the kind of story you might expect from a snake like him. Took up athletics in his homeland of Iraq, saw that there was no outlet for his favorite sport, and came to America to wrestle. Wanted the glory, mostly, because money didn't mean a thing to him. Still doesn't. After

all, if you owned a couple of dozen oil fields and could buy and sell J.R. Ewing, you wouldn't care about money, either.

So into the AWA comes Kaissie, and he sees Blackwell. Realizes



Strangling Rheingans, Blackwell keeps a watchful eye on the referee, who is momentarily distracted by Al-Kaissie (above). Tito Santana vainly tries to free himself from the grasp on Al-Kaissie (below). What would be the fate of the AWA tag team belts in the hands of these terrorists?



that if he teamed up with this 500-pound man he could take some of the glory that he wanted so dearly: mainly, the AWA tag team championship now held by Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell. Made Blackwell a Sheik, gave him a harem, and placed him on an unlimited expense account.

Blackwell sold his soul to Kaissie, and now the two are running roughshod all over the AWA. Fact is, though, that even though money has gotten them this far, the glory still evades them. That's why Kaissie decided to proclaim himself and Blackwell the "Uncrowned Tag Team Champions of the World."

Glory. It's not official, but it's glory anyway. And it's more attention for the team, and they seem to have plenty of that lately, too.

I didn't even bother to take many notes or tape the conversation, so I can't give you direct quotes. I just wanted to get out of there. Before I was able to leave, though, Kaissie made sure to point out to me that the AWA tag team title has been held up several times lately. Why? Because in matches between the Ayatollah Sheiks, or the Sheik Ayatollahs, and Gagne and Brunzell, clear victories have not been readily available.

My personal guess is what I mentioned earlier: cash. No referee is going to go so far as to swing the title the other way, but they can, given the proper monetary motivation and an exciting lack of character, make it tough on the champions by putting extra pressure on them, holding up the title, and in general placing their claim on the belts in doubt.

Sooner or later, their tactics might ultimately be successful. Personally, I hope not. A buck and a half per gallon is bad enough. □

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

(Continued from Page 29)

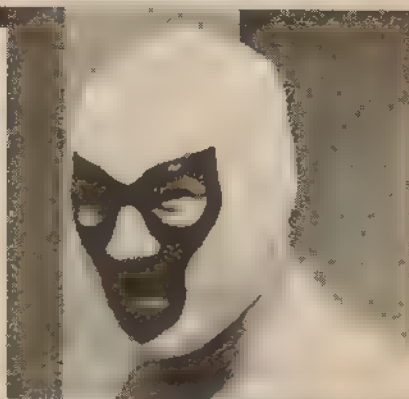
BARON VON RASCHKE

"I'm going after them, all of them, every damn worthless toad in the AWA from Nick Bockwinkel down to Ken Patera and Bobby Duncum is going to fall beneath the power and anger of the infamous Von Raschke clawhold! It's going to happen, and even though I'm giving these fools advance warning, there's nothing they can do to defend against me!"



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TULLY BLANCHARD

"Manny Fernandez did the smartest thing in the world, you know, by joining us. It proves that he has a head on his shoulders, something I always suspected but never believed until now. I guess we'll be able to teach a lesson to goons like El Canek and Chavo Guerrero now, and I'm looking forward to that."



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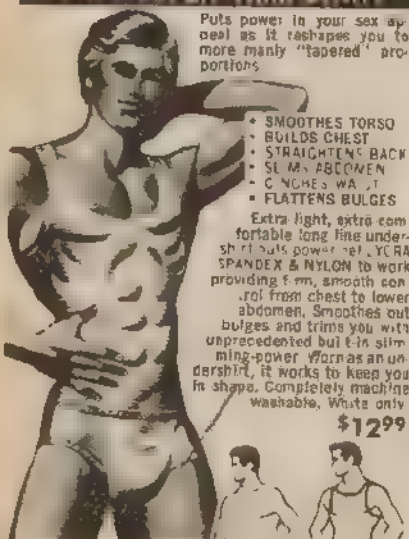
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King's Court

(Continued from Page 6)



Ventura makes sure every hair is in place before a WWF title match with Bob Backlund. Jesse very rarely gets the opportunity to wrestle as a single

water cooler. After five cupfuls of water, he was ready to resume.

"I still don't see any problem," I said to him. "I don't know whether you and Adonis can succeed, but you two guys sure seem to enjoy wrestling together."

"But I don't want to wrestle with Adrian anymore," Ventura said. "He's a great guy, and all that, but I'm bored. Every night, every day. The thing that scares me the most is what happens if we are successful. I'll go crazy!"

I still couldn't figure why Ventura was telling me this story. "Well, why don't you tell Adonis how you feel?" I said. I was beginning to feel like Peter King, wrestling psychiatrist. I've got problems of my own. What do I care about Ventura and Adonis?

"No, I can't tell him," Ventura said. "You don't understand. I made Adrian a promise. Plus, you don't know Adrian. He's got a mean temper. I really don't want to get him mad. But that's where you come in."

Swell, I thought. Just what I need. Getting a 250 pound bruiser

with a deadly sleeperhold angry at me. "Jesse, you'd better get to the point," I said

"I know a lot about your magazines. I know Adrian reads 'em... hell, everyone reads 'em. I know that if you write what I'm telling you today, it'll be published in about two months. By that time, I'll be gone. And Adrian can read all about it here. So this way I can tell him without really telling him. Get it?"

Yeah, I get it all right. With that, Ventura got up and smiled. He seemed like a man who just had a great weight removed from his shoulders. "You'll take care of it, won't you?" Ventura asked as he pushed the button to summon the elevator. "Just write down in your column that I've gone to Japan. I know Adrian will see it. Thanks, and goodbye."

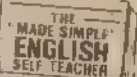
The elevator doors closed and Jesse Ventura disappeared. Who knows, maybe this is the last we'll ever see of him.

Oh, by the way. If you're reading this, Adrian Adonis, Jesse Ventura is gone. I think he's in Japan. □

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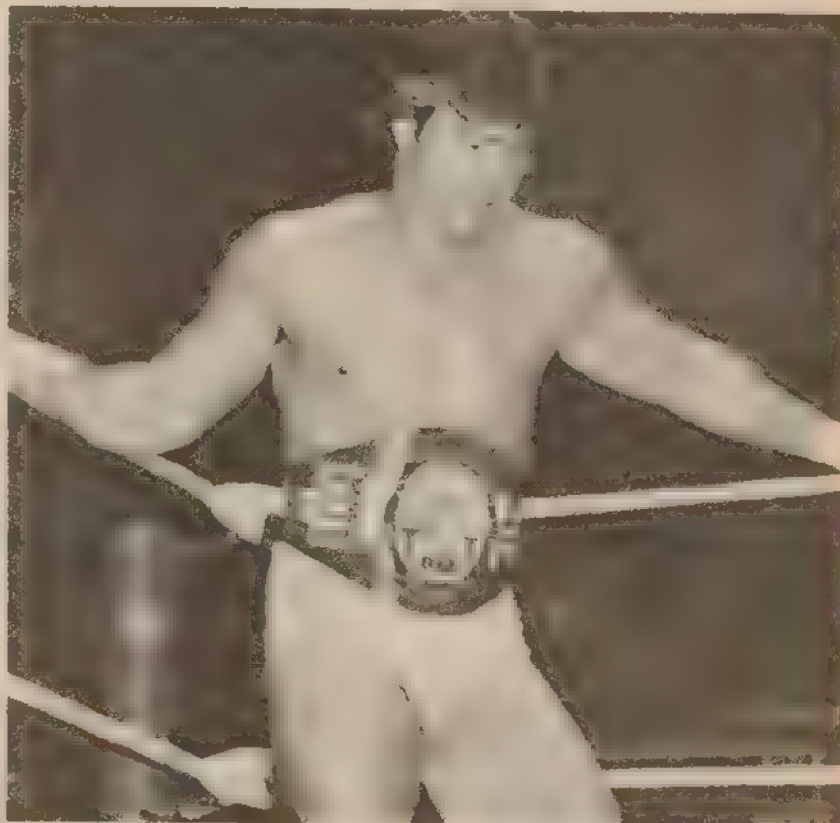
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Ringside

(Continued from Page 8)



Steve O has apparently turned his back on friends and fans alike as he has signed a contract with Jimmy Hart in Tennessee. Steve refused to explain his stance to the press.

Superstar Graham is grappling in California, Las Vegas, and Texas . . . Alexis Smirnoff is headed to Texas . . . Steve O is in Tennessee and has signed with hated manager Jimmy Hart! When asked why, Steve just pushed me aside and refused to comment . . .



Gene Kiniski worked long and hard to get the opportunity to wrestle for the title he held 13 years ago.

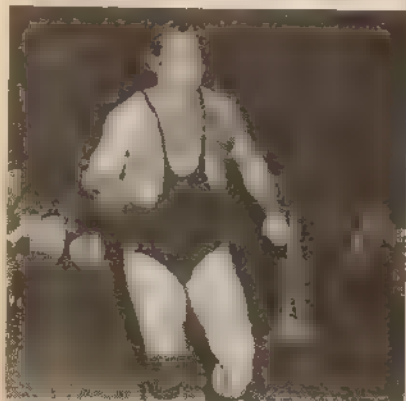
Hercules Hernandez, a Kansas City-based grappler, is being lured into Sir Oliver Humperdink's army.

Following his match against comedian Andy Kaufman, Jerry Lawler says he's considering a wrestler vs. boxer match against "Taxi" actor/boxer Tony Danza. Is this guy serious? . . . Lord Alfred Hays has signed Killer Khan to a contract in the Mid-Atlantic region . . . Brad Armstrong and Tom Pritchard are teaming very successfully in Florida.

According to Jesse Ventura, the East-West Connection has come apart at the seams. Jesse Ventura and Adrian Adonis, Ventura says, will never team again. (See King's Court for full details.)

Veteran Gene Kimski, the NWA champion from 1966 to 1969, just wrestled Ric Flair in St. Louis in a title match. Had it not been for a leg injury during the second fall (the match was split at one fall apiece), Flair admits, "The old guy mighta just done it!"

Hussein "Iron Sheik" Arab is wrestling in Tennessee as a Jimmy



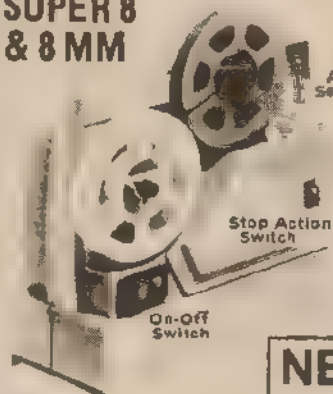
King Kong Mosca has brought his unique brand of mayhem to the Carolinas.

Hart protege . . . King Kong Mosca has invaded the Carolinas . . . Ex-referee Frenchy Bernard is being asked to come out of retirement by the NWA. Bernard was voted "Referee of the Year" several years ago, but he decided to retire. By the way, this year's award went to Japanese referee Joe Higuchi.

That's all for now. See you at ringside!

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On Assignment

(Continued from Page 10)

hotel to Kam Chin's. It was really a long way. You would think that I could get booked into a hotel closer to my assignment, no? Of course not. Matt must have really been in shape when he made the arrangements for this one.

Kam Chin's was a little place wedged in between a pizza parlor and a pawn shop on the seedy side of the state. Across the street was a Chinese restaurant and an abandoned movie theater. The sign on the door of Kam Chin's said "Lunch. Back soon." I decided to try the restaurant.

The man at the cash register pointed to a guy in the back of the room when I mentioned the name. He looked like Ming the Merciless, Charles Middleton version, only about 30 years older. I sat down without asking and ordered shredded pork with garlic sauce and fried rice. Plus water. It's a spicy dish.

I asked Kam Chin if he knew about a man named Kendo

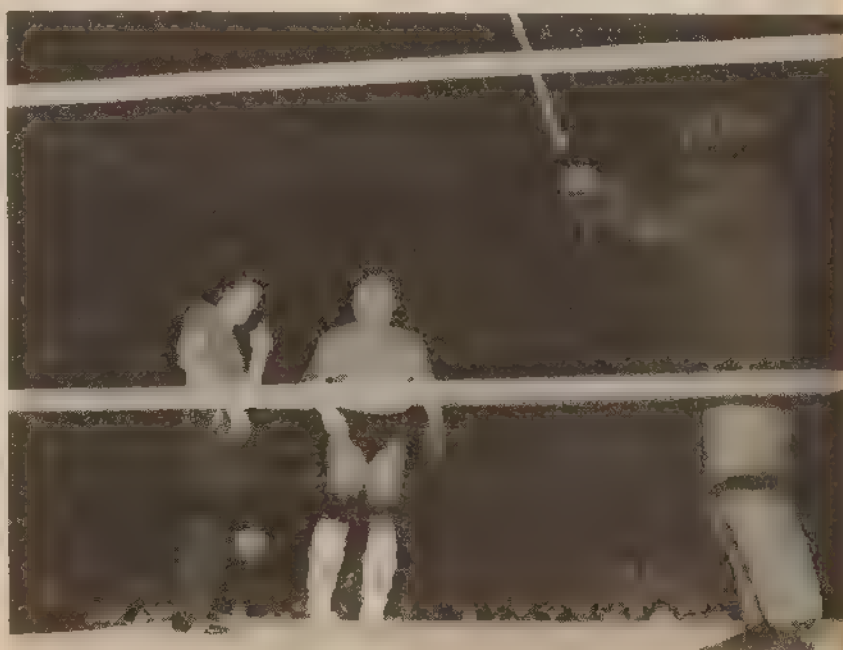
Nagasaki. "A lot of people come into my shop and buy things," he said. I knew immediately that this would be a tough interview.

Then I asked him about wrestling, described Kendo as the 6' 3" muscular monster that he is, tipping the scale at 264 and running rampant throughout the state.

"Yes, I know wrestling," he said weakly. "I see on television sometimes. Very interesting." Then he went back to his fried rice and remained silent. This guy wasn't going to volunteer a thing, and I had a flight to catch. I decided to lay my bets elsewhere and asked him about the Black Ninja Society.

"Very deadly, yes sir, very deadly," he said with enormous respect and just a touch of fear in his voice. "I would not want to be involved with them, no sir. Kill you as soon as look at you."

Well, at least I was getting something. My suspicions about the Black Ninja were confirmed.



Nagasaki, in full Black Ninja regalia, raises a kendo stick to his opponent, Dusty Rhodes. Referee Tommy Young, standing beside Rhodes, knew he would be in for a tough job officiating this match.



The frequent shrieks and facial makeup add to the treacherous aura of this evil man.

I'm glad I was only sent to talk to this guy and not to Kendo himself. I finished most of the rest of my meal in silence as Kam Chin stood up to leave. I managed to slip in one last question about Nagasaki's main weapon, the Kendo stick.

"Very deadly, yes, very," he said again. I began to wonder about the credibility of this man as he seemed to be repeating the same thing over and over. "Kendo stick can do deadly damage, kill you as soon as cripple you."

Kam Chin left the restaurant, and left me with the check. I finished my rice and paid the bill. I only had \$9 left in my pocket, so I walked the rest of the way back to the hotel.

As I walked down the street, I looked behind to Kam Chin's shop. I was close enough to still see the storefront as a hulking man, well over six-foot tall, entered the shop. I thought about going back, just to see if it was him, but I made what I felt was the right decision. I just kept walking. ☐

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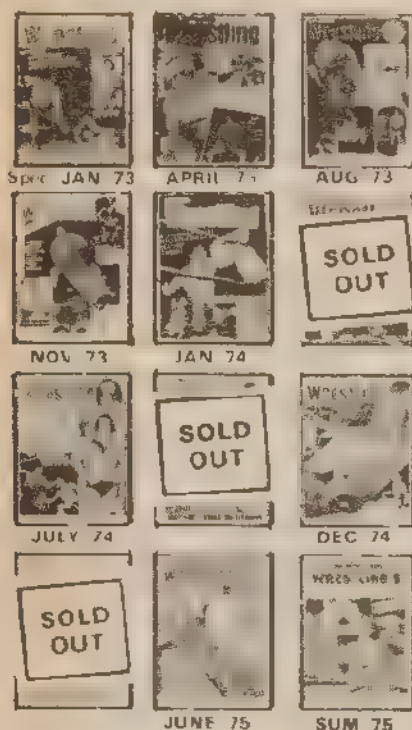
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In Focus

(Continued from Page 12)

THE EYES HAVE IT

As you can plainly see by the accompanying photo, Adrian Adonis is now sporting a class-A shiner.

"It was dark," said Adonis, "and I was heading home from a night out when I took a short cut through this alleyway. Well, five guys came flying off of fire escapes and tried to do a number on me."

Adonis grinned as he told

the story.

"I messed them up a little bit, but they managed to do this to me," said Adonis as he pointed to the eye. "I never forget a face, though, and I saw three of these guys. I swear—and I hope that they're reading this right now—I never forget a face. I'll kill 'em all if I ever run into them again."



ADRIAN ADONIS

BACK IN THE STEELE CAGE

From the now-you-see-him-now-you-don't department: George "The Animal" Steele is out of Georgia.

Recently brought into the area by Dusty Rhodes to aid in the Piper-Rich wars, Steele had been seen on an installment of *Georgia Championship Wrestling* by a doctor in the Midwest hospital

from which Steele apparently escaped. This resident phoned Georgia, informed officials in that state of the fact that Steele had in fact escaped and had not been released, and arrangements were made to have him returned to the hospital.

There is no information available as to when Steele might be officially released.

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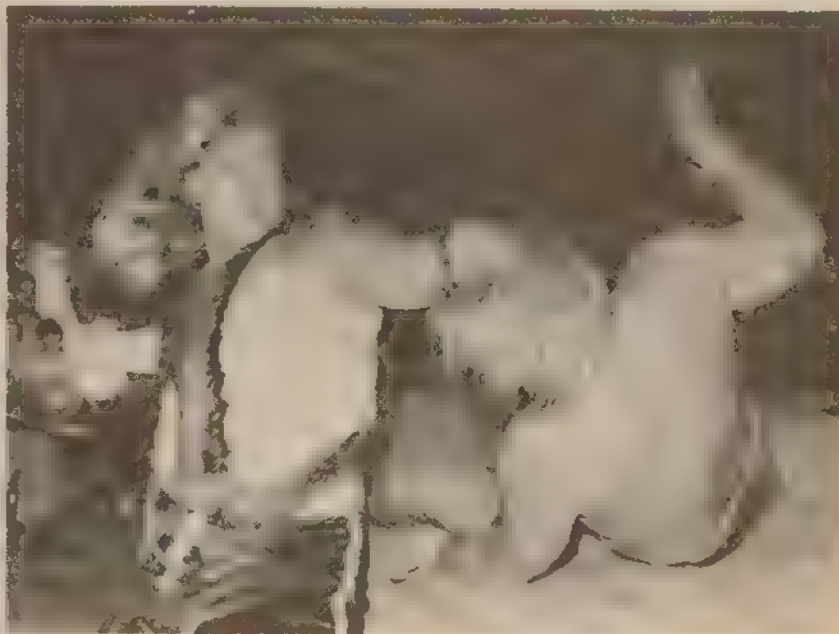


Dressing Room Confidential

(Continued from Page 18)



Terry Gordy, Hayes and Buddy Roberts stand in the ring prior to a Georgia title defense (above). Often, The Freebirds would not decide which two men would wrestle until match time. Hayes pummels Tommy Rich (below).



Hayes' nights became sleepless, and when he did manage to doze off, he had horrible nightmares. He could have taken the easy way out: retirement. After all, he had all the money he wanted. And he certainly had nothing to prove as a wrestler.

But there is something within this man that nobody really knew

at the time. The fans always viewed Michael Hayes as a trouble-making punk. He rarely wrestled with The Freebirds, leaving most of the active duty to Terry Gordy and Buddy Roberts. But he was always there, scheming and plotting and thinking of ways to cheat his opponents without being caught.

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But within Michael Hayes was a burning desire for success. And despite appearances, he never achieved that success with The Freebirds. "There are a number of ways to view success," Hayes says. "We made money and we had titles, but that's it. Gordy and Roberts were satisfied because all they think about is money and titles. Me, I wanted more. Recognition means spit if you are recognized as scum. I have the talent to wrestle by the rules. I'm not an evil person who takes pleasure in cheating and making everybody hate me. I want people on the street to recognize me and congratulate me for a match and ask me for an autograph. I don't want anyone to spit at my feet. I want people to respect my family for having a professional athlete for a son and brother. I don't want them to be ridiculed for having a thug in the family."

Today, the transition is complete. Hayes' dedication to the cause of scientific wrestling has endeared him to fans nationwide. His fellow wrestlers are now confident of his friendship and loyalty. And Hayes is secure enough to leave Georgia, travel to another area, and know his fans will still be there when he returns.

His life is a bit more serene and he seems much the happier man for it. "With The Freebirds, it was one feud after another," he recalls. "They would throw combination after combination at us until they found the right formula to knock us off."

"Now I am in a position where I can pick and choose my feuds. I'm out of the limelight when I want to be and back in when the spirit moves me. People ask me if I mind not getting the coverage and publicity I did when I was a Freebird. And I tell 'em, Michael Hayes is no longer a Freebird. But he's as free as a bird—and he loves it."

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Press Conference

(Continued from Page 25)

MARTEL: That's true, Stu. It becomes a problem in wrestling when you're after a particular title and you have to compete against good friends on the way to that title. It makes a match very difficult, because you're thinking about trying to win, and you're also thinking about what you might be doing to your friend. You kind of feel you're walking a tightrope, and sometimes it takes away from that competitive edge that you need to win.

FARHOOD: Do you think you'll run into that problem with anyone in the AWA?

MARTEL: Well, Tito Santana is a good friend, and of course Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell. I

don't know. I think a match between myself and Tito would be a very good one, but again there's that problem I just mentioned. If I had to wrestle Tito, I think it would be an extremely difficult thing to do.

SAKS: What do you think will be the fate of the WWF tag team championship now that you and Tony Garea are no longer challenging Fuji and Saito for the belts?

MARTEL: Well, Stu, I'm afraid that Fuji and Saito may be able to hold on to the belts for a while, but I'm pulling for somebody to knock them out of there. The Carolina Connection, Steve Travis and Quickdraw

Martel and Garea, the most popular tag team competition in the history of the WWF, are besieged by autograph-seekers before a match (below). Martel, the winner of the "Sexiest Wrestler" poll in the Fall 1982 issue of our sister publication, WRESTLING SUPERSTARS, poses for our photographer (opposite page).



Rick McGraw, look really good right now, and I think that they have as good a chance as anyone of beating Fuji and Saito. The Strongbrows also look like



strong challengers. And there's always Adonis and Ventura.

COUNTIS: Do you think you'll be wrestling in tag team matches over in the AWA, or will you stick with solo matches?

MARTEL: Well, like I said earlier, one-on-one competition is a form of wrestling I've neglected for some time, and I think it's important that I get back to some of the basics and work on my solo style for a while. I'm hoping to get a shot at Bockwinkel, but I don't know how that's going to work yet, he's very choosy about opponents. Someday, though, I'll probably be back in a tag team.

FARHOOD: Rick, good luck in the AWA, and thanks for spending some time with us.

MARTEL: Thank you, Steve, my pleasure. ☐

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(Continued from Page 34)



Referee Nick Patrick does not have the strength to prevent Piper's assault on Bob Armstrong. Armstrong had just finished off his scheduled opponent when he was sneak-attacked by Roddy.

"Photos from one of your people, Emmy Yates, of an interview I did with Super Destroyer where the truth of your yellow journalism was brought out into the public eye for all to see and hate."

I still didn't quite understand. I checked the magazine binder that held every issue of *PWI* since we started publishing and turned to the most recent issues.

There it was: clear as day right on the cover "Rodney Piper. The Most Powerful Voice in Wrestling!" It was our August, 1982 issue.

Suddenly I remembered: I had spotted the error in his name just before the magazine went to press. I meant to call and correct the error, I mentioned it to our Production Chief, but it just slipped everyone's mind. Life gets hectic around deadline time, but never has something like this slipped through and into print. As far as I was concerned, there was

no excuse, but that didn't make this enraged wrestler in front of me disappear

"I don't know why you people have it in for me," Piper said, "but I'm fed up with it. I do my job, I do a fine job, and when I get home from a hard day in front of the cameras having to put up with the abuse from people like Rich and the Armstrongs, I don't want to have to see the same kind of abuse from one of your magazines."

"Look, in another one of your rags you printed a poll of the fans to see who the sexiest wrestler is [Wrestling Superstars, Fall 1982]," Piper continued. "Now that's not your fault. I know you can't help it if the fans are too blind to realize that the great R.P. is one of the sexiest men ever to grace the wrestling ring. I can't help it if the fans are so stupid as to vote Rick Martel and Tommy Rich as the two sexiest

wrestlers in the sport, that's *their* problem.

"But my problem is that now you've got a fan ballot going that's trying to run me out of a job," screamed Piper, referring to a poll in the August issue of *The Wrestler*. "How would you like it if I started a campaign on television to run your magazines out of business?"

"Hey, listen," I interrupted, "that has nothing to do with us. You're a controversial figure, and we have to find out what the fans think about..."

"Find out nothing," he declared. "It's a blatant attempt to make me look bad, to turn people against me, and that's playing dirty. Now you've got my name as 'Rodney' on the cover of your magazine... what gives?"

"Fine, but read the story," I told Piper, "it's praising you all over the place."

"As it well should, King! I deserve all that praise," Piper declared. "But let me tell you one thing: Get my name right in the future, or suffer the consequences! My name is Roderick Piper. It is not Roddy. I've had it up to here with irresponsible people attacking me and my good name, and from this day forward, I'm not putting up with any of it."

Piper turned to storm out of the office as I sat in near shock. He was visibly enraged, but it must have hurt him deeply for him to travel to our office from Atlanta like that.

"One more thing," Piper added as he was practically out the door. "Another attack like this and I'll be back in these offices so fast it'll make your head spin. You'll regret it for the rest of your life if I have to make this trip again, and I'm holding you personally responsible. Remember that well, King, remember it well." □

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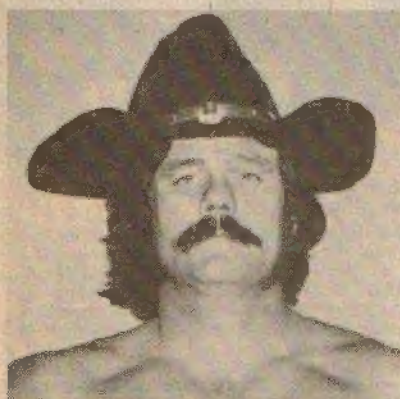
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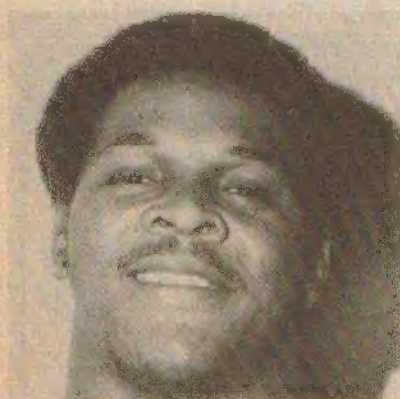
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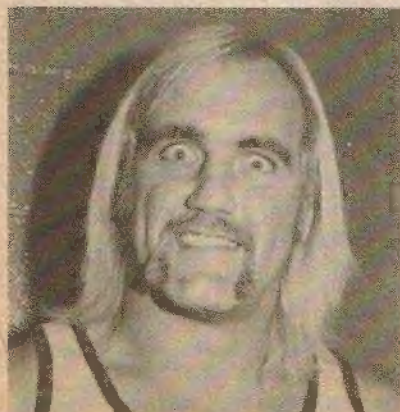
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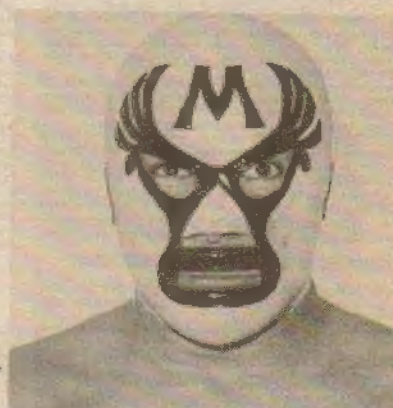
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